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INTERNATIONAL  
WOMEN'S  
TRIBUNE  
CENTRE

# THE TRIBUNE

*A WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY*



***WOMEN MOVING HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE STAGE***

**NEWSLETTER 58**

**MAY 1999**



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(A separate order form is also included as an insert)

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## **USING INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS TO LEVERAGE CHANGE**

### **Challenging Structures**

In the early 1990s, a series of seemingly unrelated actions were taken by women in different countries around different issues: the Asian Women's Human Rights Council began a campaign calling upon the Japanese government to formally acknowledge and compensate those women—Korean, Indonesian, Chinese, Dutch, and Filipina—who, during World War II, were forced into sexually servicing the Japanese Imperial Army; a Zambian woman sued a hotel for denying her admission because she was unaccompanied; and women organized in Colombia to pressure the government to allocate money for health services for poor women.

In all these instances, the women met with a significant measure of success. What was the common link? Although the situations varied enormously by country and issue, what each had in common was the decision by the women involved to use an international convention as one of their tools to force change in institutional structures at the national level. In the first instance, the Asian Women's Human Rights Council used The Hague Convention of 1907. In the next two incidents, the women used the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as their convention of choice.

In using an international legal instrument—that had been agreed upon by governments in the global arena—to challenge governments to rectify unjust situations at the national level, women "took the global and made it local." In doing so, they pointed the way to an array of new tools that could significantly expand and strengthen women's ability to leverage change on a range of issues.



# USING INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

“

*We need to engage in the process of evolving a core of universal standards for women's rights. If we do not do this, rights for women will be subject to changing ideologies and shifting socio-economic and political contexts.*

”

Shanthi Dairiam, Director,  
International Women's Human Rights  
Watch (IWWRAW), Asia Pacific

## Identifying Key Elements of a Strategy

A closer review of these seemingly disparate situations reveals other similarities. Behind each action, there was a *collaboration among activists with different expertise*—lawyers, community workers, journalists and others—to put a selected women's issue into the public arena with a demand on government for precedent-setting action. Secondly, each incident was characterized by women *consciously seeking spaces—openings and opportunities—to make public and visible previously invisible or widely accepted practices*. As women move in greater numbers to “go public with their vision,” this search for and use of “spaces” is becoming a trademark of our work. The women's world conferences of 1975, 1980, 1985 and 1995 are the most obvious examples of women using international fora to make issues visible, but women are also beginning to use the international convention reporting process as another “space” to promote change. A third similarity among the different incidents is that each demonstrated a *clear understanding on the part of the “actors” of legal leverage points*: in other words, which issue could be matched with which convention and under what circumstances in order to promote change.

Finally, each case illustrated that the *organizers understood and used both the power of information in all its various forms and the power of numbers*. The power of information is seen in the way that activists are teaching themselves about the conventions as well as using the media to raise public awareness and international support. The power of numbers is seen in the placing of the convention strategy within the context of the women's movement at the national, regional and international level. In other words, behind each action was a movement.

## Taking a Hands-on Approach to Conventions

These examples are encouraging and, as our understanding grows and knowledge spreads, the examples we can point to will increase.

Where women are taking a “hands on” approach to working with international conventions they are, in the process, re-defining who participates in the legal arena, the nature of the dialogue that takes place, and how the terms are defined—and redefined. Equally important, these international conventions that define our human rights serve as the foundation for building a more just and equitable social, political and economic order. One of the most significant contributions of the women's movement worldwide is the effort to move the concept of human rights centre stage as the general framework by which we live and work and by which all nations and institutions assess change and development.



# TO LEVERAGE CHANGE

## First Steps for "First Timers"

One of the first questions many community activists ask when confronted with international conventions is: where and how do I begin? Consider giving yourself a "getting to know you" period with conventions, a time to familiarize yourself with what they are, how they work, and where and how you can enter the process of making them work for you. Here are some ideas to start you off:

### Learn the language of the conventions.

Understanding what a convention says can be a daunting task since a convention is written, by necessity, in "legalese". For advocacy purposes, you will eventually want to be able to speak about the convention in "two tongues": one is the language that lawyers and legal professionals use—the words, terms and phrases of the conventions. The other is the language that communicates the principles and ideas of the conventions to your constituency or the public at large.

You may want to develop your own glossary, or list of terms that are used and their definitions. Several of the new books cited on pp. 33-34 include glossaries that you can use as a start. Developing a glossary in your local language would be an important contribution to women in your community who are eager to use the international conventions for change.

### Put conventions in your own words and in terms that make sense within your own everyday reality.

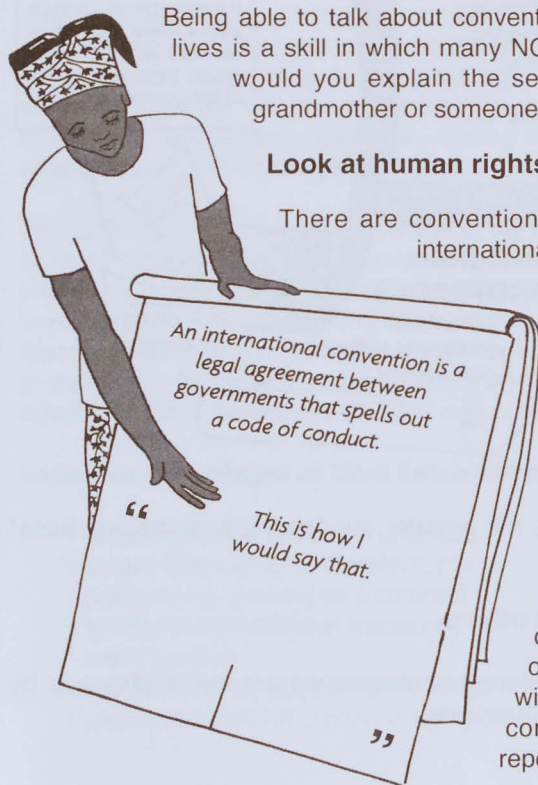
Being able to talk about conventions in terms that are understandable to people in their daily lives is a skill in which many NGOs are developing considerable expertise. For example, how would you explain the sentence in the graphic below to a neighbour, a friend, your grandmother or someone else for whom international conventions are an unknown?

#### Look at human rights conventions within the larger picture...

There are conventions on hundreds of issues. In fact, there are more than 600 international conventions of which 95 are considered international human rights instruments. Some conventions cover several issues, such as the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Others focus on just one issue, such as the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women.

#### ... then see how conventions can change the larger picture.

This "top down" approach of using international conventions to change national law is particularly important when, at the national level, the government is unwilling to address women's human rights issues. If a State adopts an international convention, then all the national law and legislation within that country must be changed or instituted as necessary to conform with the principles in the convention. In addition, in ratifying a convention, a State agrees to international monitoring and/or reporting as to its compliance.





# USING INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

## Look at the structure of conventions:

A convention begins with a preamble or introduction followed by articles or paragraphs that spell out (1) human rights guarantees and protections; (2) states responsibilities; (3) mechanisms for monitoring the convention; and (4) ratification rules. There may also be "add-ons" to a convention. These include Optional Protocols, which are additional agreements to the convention, and Reservations, made by States when they do not wish to be bound by specific parts of the convention.

Each convention has within it a complaints procedure that specifies the steps to be taken in reporting a violation. Documenting human rights violations is a learned skill that many groups are beginning to build into their own programmes.

## Learn from others how to use conventions successfully:

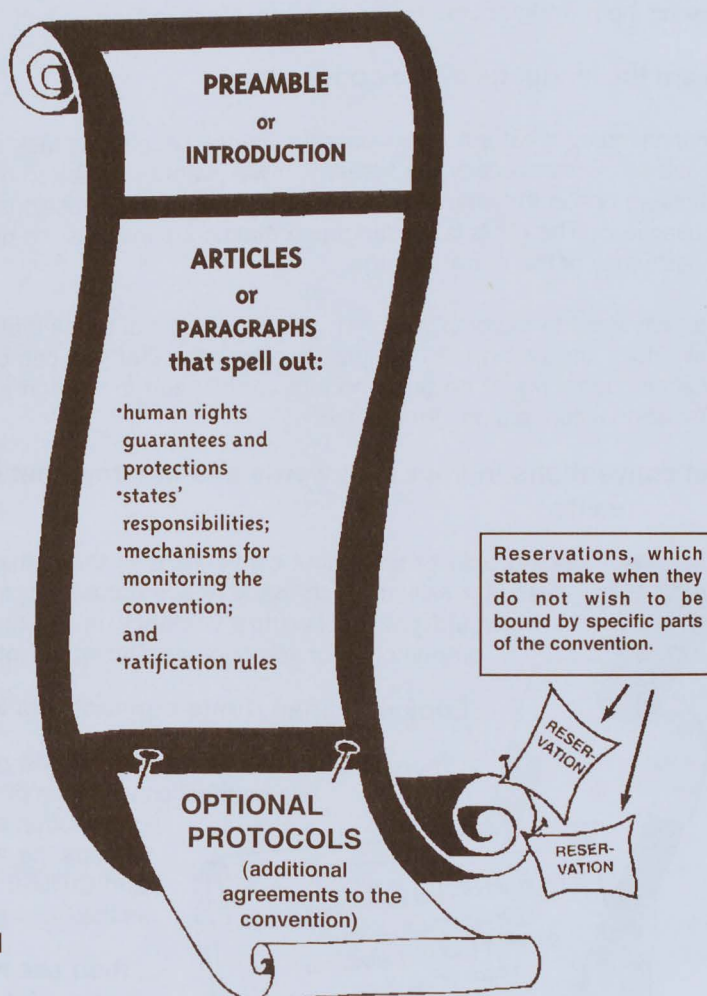
Knowing how to use a convention effectively is as important as knowing what it is. The examples on page 3 are just a few of the ways in which women have been using conventions.

## Develop a strategy in response to your own identified needs, goals and objectives...

Conventions can be used to press for change in a number of arenas. The more women work with conventions, the broader our "convention strategy base" becomes.

## ....and then share your experiences and learnings with others

Experience tells us that by sharing information about the different strategies we are developing and by building coalitions for action, we can maximize our work with conventions.





## TO LEVERAGE CHANGE

### Decide which conventions are right for you.

Know what rights are guaranteed by the relevant international conventions and which one (or combination of two or more) will be most useful to you and the issues you are working on. Find out where your country stands in ratifying the international human rights conventions of particular relevance to women. States generally go through a two step process in adopting a convention: signing and ratifying. Only when a State has ratified a convention is it legally binding on the State.

At the present time, the reality is that few women know much about international conventions—far less how to use them—whether they live in New York or in Noumea. With the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)—popularly known as the Women's Convention—many women started using conventions for the first time.

If we are to use international conventions to their fullest extent, it will be necessary for each of us to assume a role and responsibility for it to happen. Fortunately, there are encouraging signs that women and organizations in countries worldwide are responding to that challenge. We are writing; we are educating; we are mobilizing; we are teaching and training; we are building coalitions—closing the gap between academic and activist, lawyer and popular educator.

The following pages summarize some of the main features of several other international conventions that could make a difference in the struggle to have violations against women's human rights recognized and brought to justice. Many of these conventions are relatively unknown, yet they have been in existence for twenty or thirty years and offer important advantages that sometimes CEDAW cannot provide.

### Important Advantages of More Established Conventions

- more extensive coverage of issues
- longer histories and, therefore, more precedence (power) as a contract
- stricter implementation measures
- more funding
- more frequently convened meetings
- more enforcement procedures in place

"We've got to get moving on women's human rights in this country. I wonder if there's an international convention that can help us?"





# USING INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

## INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS (ICCPR)

...ensures to everyone the same political and civil rights—including freedom, equality and physical integrity—focusing on rights of nationality, freedom of movement, political and civil participation. These include the right to privacy, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the rights to gather peacefully and have equal access to public services. It also declares that men and women have the same rights and responsibilities entering, during, and at the end of marriage (23).



*Women are using article 3 to enforce our right to live without discrimination of any kind based on sex.*

*Article 8 prohibits slavery and is being used in campaigns against sexual exploitation and trafficking.*

*Articles 2, 6, 7, 9, and 17 of the ICCPR have been instrumental in the definition of torture against women.*

## INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS (ICESCR)

...covers people's right to choose their own economic, social and cultural development (1) as well as the right to life, liberty, and security of person (2). More specifically, it includes the right to an adequate standard of living for oneself and one's family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care (11), social security (9), employment (6, 7, 8, 10), education (13, 14), and culture (15). It also guarantees the right to special health services with respect to pregnancy, childbirth, and the postnatal period (12).



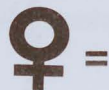
*This convention has been used to push for reproductive rights (2, 10 and 12) and rights concerning housing, land, and property (11:1).*

## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (ICERD)

...aims to eliminate racial discrimination, that is, any distinction or reference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. It declares that no acts of racial discrimination will be tolerated (2). In addition, governments guarantee equality before the law in the enjoyment of the same rights granted to everyone else in that State, (5) as well as encourage multiracial organizations and combat prejudice in teaching. (7)



*This important convention was especially useful to women before the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) came into force.*



The biological symbol for woman. It is used here to indicate how women could use, or are using the convention as a tool for change.





CONVENTION

INTERNATIONAL  
CONVENTION ON  
ELIMINATION OF  
ALL FORMS OF RACIAL  
DISCRIMINATION  
(ICERD)

aims to eliminate discrimination, that distinction or reference to race, colour, descent, or ethnic origin which has purpose or effect of impairing the recognition or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms in political, economic, cultural or any other public life. It declares that racial discrimination is prohibited (2). In addition, it guarantees equal rights in the enjoyment of the rights granted to citizens in that State. (3) It encourages multiracial cooperation and combat against discrimination. (7)

This important convention was especially useful to women. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women came into force

# TO LEVERAGE CHANGE

## CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMANE OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT (CAT)

... defines torture as "the intentional infliction of severe pain or suffering, either physical or mental, by anyone acting in an official capacity for the purpose of getting information, forcing a confession, punishment, intimidation, coercion, or discrimination of any kind." It declares that no one should be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (12) and that governments should try to prevent torture in their territory. They must also take measures to punish the perpetrators of torture and provide help for torture victims.



*Women activists have successfully used this convention in the fight to have rape defined as a form of torture and prosecuted as a war crime. We are still fighting for a broadening of the definition of torture to include actions by people who are not officials of the state (e.g. domestic violence).*

## SUPPLEMENTARY CONVENTION ON THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, THE SLAVE TRADE AND INSTITUTIONS AND PRACTICES SIMILAR TO SLAVERY (SCAS)

This supplementary convention to the Slavery Convention of 1926 is designed to intensify national as well as international efforts towards the abolition of slavery, the slave trade and institutions and practices similar to slavery. These include debt bondage, serfdom, and the marriage trade (1). In addition, it provides definitions for "slavery," "a person of service status," and "slave trade" to help identify practices which are similar to slavery.



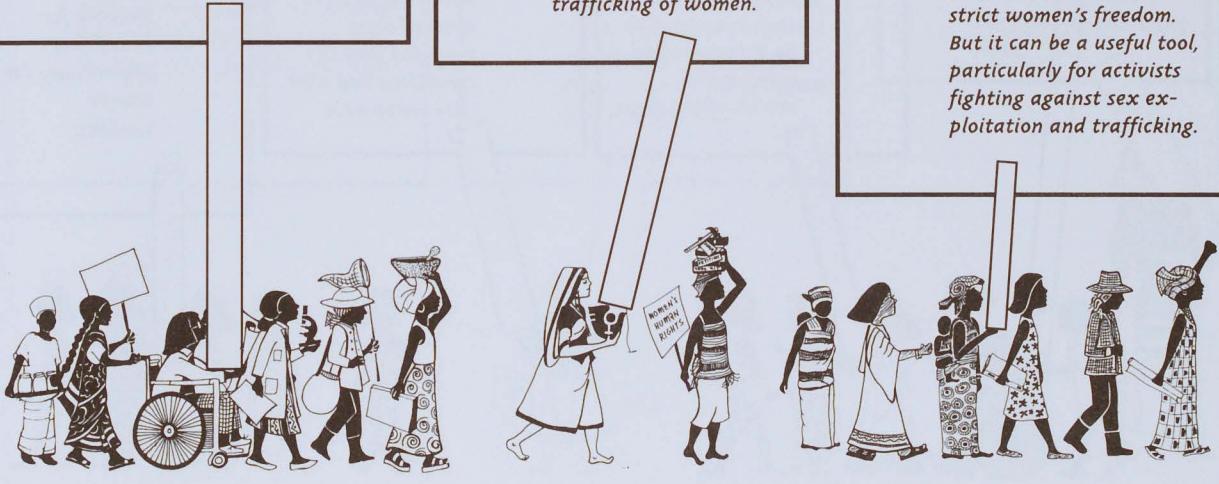
*This convention has been part of efforts by groups working on issues like sex tourism, prostitution, mail-order brides, and exploited domestic workers, towards the prevention and punishment of sexual exploitation and trafficking of women.*

## CONVENTION FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE TRAFFIC IN PERSONS AND THE EXPLOITATION OF THE PROSTITUTION OF OTHERS (CST)

...ensures that action will be taken to fight sexual exploitation and trafficking through measures of prevention and punishment. Countries must punish anyone who either forces or persuades another person into prostitution, profits from the prostitution of another person, or who owns, manages or finances a brothel (1). Countries promise to take certain measures to prevent prostitution, such as through health, educational, economic and other services (16), by publicizing the dangers of trafficking (17), and by monitoring transportation venues (17). This convention also states that victims of forced prostitution have the right to rehabilitation (16).



*Some activists believe that this convention offers inadequate protection, yet goes too far in outlawing prostitution, particularly when it is consensual. It also contains several paragraphs that actually restrict women's freedom. But it can be a useful tool, particularly for activists fighting against sex exploitation and trafficking.*





# USING INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

## CONVENTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION (CDE)

...states that that everyone has the right to education no matter where you are from (4a). Discrimination in education must be ended, and equality of opportunity and education should be encouraged by national laws.



*More specifically, the CDE grants women the right to the same level and standard of education as men and boys (1a) and both women and men the right to a free and compulsory primary education (4a), to accessible secondary education (4a), and to higher education based on merit (4a).*

## EQUAL REMUNERATION CONVENTION (ERC)

...aims to put in place the principle of equal remuneration (salary or wage) for men and women workers for work of equal value. Methods to achieve this goal include national laws or regulations, wage determinations by official institutions, and/or mutual agreements between employers and workers. It gives workers the right to work and to freely choose their job (1b), the right to work in fair and safe conditions and to be paid enough for an adequate standard of living, supplemented by social protections if necessary (2:1).



*The convention gives women the right to have the same working conditions as men, especially equal pay for equal work (2:1). Wages are to be determined by an objective review of the work*

## MATERNITY PROTECTION CONVENTION (MPC)

...ensures maternity rights to all qualified women: those employed in industrial work and in non-industrial and agricultural occupations, including women wage earners working at home. (1)



*The rights include maternity leave with pay or adequate social security benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances (4), a maternity leave of at least twelve weeks (3), and the right to receive medical benefits while on maternity leave (4). The convention also gives women the right to nurse their baby during the working day (5) and protects them from being fired if they have to take more time off work provided that the conditions and time are reasonable.*

## DISCRIMINATION (EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION) CONVENTION (DC)

... states that all workers, both women and men, have the right to equal opportunities and treatment with regard to employment and occupation. This should be brought about through national policies designed to eliminate discrimination and to encourage equality of opportunity and treatment (2).



*Across all sectors of the economy, women occupy low- or middle-level positions and rarely rise to the top. This convention is important for all those involved in working for equality of opportunity for women workers.*





# TO LEVERAGE CHANGE

## CONVENTION CONCERNING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUAL TREATMENT FOR MEN AND WOMEN WITH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES (CCEO)

... applies to men and women workers who have the responsibility of taking care of their own or their immediate family's children where such familial responsibilities limit the possibilities of their own economic activity (1). It prevents a worker with family responsibilities from being discriminated against (3:1) or fired (8) on the basis of these responsibilities. Countries must take measures to enable you to have the freedom to choose employment as well as fair working conditions and social security (4a,b), to have community services such as child care and family services and facilities (11), and to have vocational guidance and training that will help you remain integrated in the workforce or reenter the workforce if your family responsibilities cause you to leave it (7).



*This convention is particularly important to women since they make up the majority of those caring for children, and increasingly work outside the home. Every working parent has the right to decent child care, and this convention is an important tool with which to fight for that right.*

## HOME WORK CONVENTION (HWC)

... refers to the 25% of the world's informal sector that participates in home work, that is, the production of goods or the provision of services for an employer or contractor under an arrangement whereby the work is carried out at a place of the worker's choosing, often at home. According to the principles of this convention, home workers are entitled to equal treatment as wage earners (4). This includes protection against discrimination in employment and occupation, the right to social security, health benefits, training, and maternity protection, protection by a minimum age for work (4:2), and protection under national laws and regulations on safety and health which apply at work (7). Home work should also be included in national labour statistics.



*Although not yet entered into force, the HWC is particularly significant to women since they constitute 85% of the world's home workers and have historically been denied employment rights. The HWC is the result of a vigorous global campaign for these rights, and we should lobby for our countries to ratify it.*

## CONVENTION ON THE NATIONALITY OF MARRIED WOMEN (CNMW)

... involves nationality entering, during, and after marriage. It states that if a woman marries someone with another nationality, her nationality need not automatically be changed to that of her husband. Nor will she find herself suddenly stateless. If she chooses, however, she must be granted her husband's nationality (1, 3). Also, a change in the nationality of her husband during marriage does not automatically change her nationality (1). If a marriage ends, neither a woman's nationality nor that of her children will automatically be affected (1).



*This convention gives women equal rights to men with respect to their own nationality, as well as that of their children. It is used by women worldwide as an important tool in the fight for this basic right.*





# INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

## CONVENTION ON CONSENT TO MARRIAGE, MINIMUM AGE FOR MARRIAGE AND REGISTRATION OF MARRIAGE (CCM)

...ensures freedom in selecting a spouse, eliminating child marriages and the marriage of young girls before the age of puberty. More specifically, this convention guarantees that a woman has the same right as a man to freely choose a spouse and enter a marriage only with her full consent (1), that countries must set a minimum age for marriage (2), and that all marriages must be registered in an official registry (3).



*This convention confirms women's right to decide when and with whom they will marry, and offers women activists a tool with which to pressure their governments to reform discriminatory laws and practices.*

## CONVENTION RELATING TO THE STATUS OF REFUGEES/PROTOCOL RELATING TO THE STATUS OF REFUGEES (CRSR)

... provides general protection for refugees, defined as anyone who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of her nationality and is unable or unwilling to avail herself of the protection of that country (1: 2). It also provides rights to the refugee in the country where refuge is taken, providing protection from being punished for entering a country illegally, (provided she has immediately reported to the authorities and has shown good reason for entry (31), and from being expelled without a fair hearing before the law.

It provides refugees with many of the same rights as national citizens of the country in which they have taken refuge, including juridical status (16) and gainful employment 17, 18, 19). As the convention was restricted to people who became refugees before 1 January 1951, the protocol extends the provisions of the convention to refugees regardless of when they became refugees.



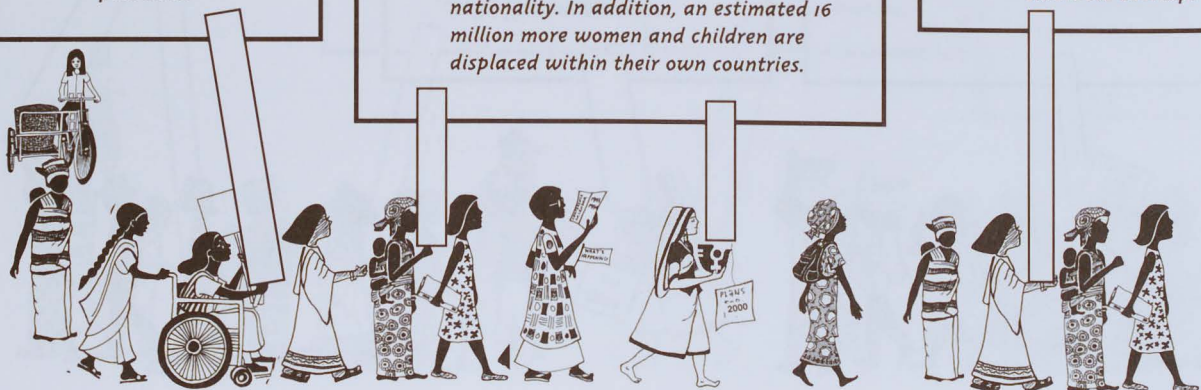
*Since 80% of the nearly 20 million refugees worldwide are women and children, this convention is particularly important to women. However, it does have limitations, e.g., it does not address the specific needs of women who are especially vulnerable in this situation, including issues of violence, rape/sex exploitation and loss of nationality. In addition, an estimated 16 million more women and children are displaced within their own countries.*

## CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CRC)

... ensures that all children have the same rights as adults, including political, civil, economic and social rights. It also provides additional protections especially for children, such as the right to live with their parents unless separation is in the best interests of the child (9), and to have access to information from a variety of sources that is socially and culturally beneficial (17).



*Article 34 protects children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including unlawful sexual activity. Article 32 grants special protections from economic exploitation, including a minimum age for employment. These examples from the CRC demonstrate that children's rights and women's rights have considerable overlap.*





... ensures that all  
have the same  
adults, including  
civil, economic and  
rights. It also  
additional protection  
cially for children  
the right to live with  
parents unless seen  
in the best interest  
child (9), and to  
access to information  
a variety of sources  
socially and  
beneficial (17).



Article 34 of the  
children from  
ual exploitation  
abuse, including  
unlawful sexual  
activity. Article  
grants special  
protection to  
economic edu-  
cation, including  
minimum age  
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examples from  
CRC demonstrate  
that children's  
rights and  
rights have a  
siderable impact



## LOOKING MORE CLOSELY AT ONE CONVENTION

### Mapping Out a Process

Because it is difficult to talk about using conventions in the abstract, this section focuses on just one convention. The convention chosen here is CEDAW, but the same steps can be followed with almost any of the international human rights conventions. You will want to select your convention by matching the rights guaranteed by a particular convention with the issues you are working on.

The following pages describe how a convention process "works" in order to give you an understanding of how to use it for work on your own issue. They look at the convention's strengths and weakness and its leverage points (the complaints and reporting procedures).

### Knowing what a convention says...

Within your own organization you will want your co-workers to have an understanding of the significance of the convention and which rights it covers, particularly if you are proposing to use the convention within an overall advocacy strategy to advance your issue. To illustrate one approach to introducing a convention, the next two pages offer a "walk through CEDAW" in a popular format that highlights the rights along with the paragraph in which the right is elaborated. This "at a glance" version of CEDAW can be easily adapted as a poster or a flyer while at the same time serving as a roadmap and timesaver to find where, within the body of the convention, the different rights are spelled out.



# A WALK THROUGH CEDAW...

## ARTICLE 1:

### **DEFINITION OF DISCRIMINATION**

Discrimination against women is: "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women...of human rights and fundamental freedoms."

## ARTICLE 2:

### **POLICY MEASURES TO BE TAKEN**

Governments condemn discrimination against women in all its forms and will work to end it. This includes abolishing all existing laws, customs and regulations that are discriminatory.

## ARTICLE 3:

### **GUARANTEE OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS**

Governments will take all appropriate actions to ensure the advancement of women and to protect their rights on a basis of equality with men.

## ARTICLE 4:

### **TEMPORARY SPECIAL MEASURES**

Governments may institute affirmative action programmes to ensure women's advancement. This will not be considered discriminatory.

## ARTICLE 5:

### **SEX ROLES AND STEREOTYPING**

Governments will strive to eliminate cultural and traditional practices that perpetuate discrimination and gender stereotyping of women.

## ARTICLE 6:

### **PROSTITUTION**

Governments will work to eliminate trafficking in women and the exploitation of prostitution of women.

## ARTICLE 7:

### **POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE**

Governments will work to eliminate discrimination against women in political and public life and shall ensure women the right to vote and to hold office.

## ARTICLE 8:

### **PARTICIPATION AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL**

Governments will take action to ensure women the opportunity to represent their government at the international level and participate in international organizations.

## ARTICLE 9:

### **NATIONALITY**

Governments will grant women equal rights to change or retain their nationality and that of their children.



## ...THE WOMEN'S CONVENTION

### ARTICLE 10:

#### **EQUAL RIGHTS IN EDUCATION**

Governments will act to eliminate discrimination against women in education. This includes giving women equal access to education and vocational guidance; the same curricula, examinations, standards for teaching and equipment; and equal access to scholarships and grants.

### ARTICLE 11:

#### **EMPLOYMENT**

Governments will eliminate discrimination against women in the workplace. Women will have the same employment rights as men as well as maternity leave and special protection against harmful work during pregnancy.

### ARTICLE 12:

#### **HEALTH CARE AND FAMILY PLANNING**

Governments will eliminate discrimination against women in health care and provide equal access on a basis with men to health care services, including family planning

### ARTICLE 13:

#### **ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS**

Governments will act to eliminate discrimination against women in the economic and social arenas. Women will have equal access to family benefits, loans and credits, and an equal right to participate in recreational activities, sports and cultural life.

### ARTICLE 14:

#### **RURAL WOMEN**

Governments will consider the particular problems faced by rural women and act to eliminate discrimination against them.

### ARTICLE 15:

#### **EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW**

Governments will give women equality with men before the law, including rights to contract, administer property, appear in court or before tribunals, and to choose residence and domicile.

### ARTICLE 16:

#### **MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LAW**

Governments will seek to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters related to marriage and the family, including the right to choose freely the number and spacing of children and equal rights and responsibilities regarding ownership, management and disposition of property.

### ARTICLES 17-22:

Detail the establishment and function of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

### ARTICLES 23-30:

Detail the administration of the Convention.



## LOOKING MORE CLOSELY

### Knowing a Convention's Strengths and Limitations

#### Strengths

CEDAW is often described as an international bill of rights for women. It was the first international convention to embody the concept that rights are basic values shared by every human, no matter what their gender, race, religion, culture or age. It discusses women's equality in the broader context of poverty, racism, armed conflict and development and confronts certain issues for the first time, such as the need to modify social and cultural patterns.

CEDAW also requires governments to take responsibility for acts of discrimination inflicted by a "person, organization or enterprise." It thus covers discrimination in the home—a critical step in incorporating the domestic realm within the human rights framework.

#### Other advantages of CEDAW:

- One of the most widely ratified conventions (163 as of December 1998)
- The first convention to define discrimination exclusively from a woman's perspective
- Outlines government's obligations to comply with it
- Ratifying governments must report regularly on their progress in implementing the convention
- Committee of experts receptive to input from NGOs, especially shadow reports

#### Limitations

Although CEDAW is one of the most widely ratified conventions, it also is the convention with the most reservations, which therefore limit its effectiveness. Many countries made reservations to any paragraphs that might conflict with Islamic Sharia law (Bangladesh, Egypt, and Libyan Arab Jamahiriya). Other areas that have met with reservations are women serving in the armed forces (Germany), night work of women (Austria), compulsory registration of marriage (India) and equal rights to nationality (Korea).

#### Other limitations to CEDAW:

- Does not explicitly cover violence against women
- Lack of monitoring and enforcement mechanisms
- Does not allow for individual complaints (though see opposite: Optional Protocol)
- Backlog of reports
- No official channel for NGO reporting



**Countries with reservations:** Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Cyprus, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Venezuela, Viet Nam and Yemen. To find out what your country's reservations are, check the UN Web site <<http://www.un.org>> and look under "Treaties." If you do not have access to the Internet, call the Attorney General's office in your country.

**Countries that have not yet ratified CEDAW (as of April 1999):** Afghanistan, Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Micronesia, Monaco, Niger, Oman, Palau, Qatar, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Emirates, United States of America.



# AT ONE CONVENTION

## Identifying Convention Leverage Points

### 1. The Complaint Procedure

Women's and human rights activists have been lobbying for several years for an Optional Protocol to be added to CEDAW that would strengthen the Convention by correcting what were felt to be its limitations. The draft Protocol included allowing individual women or groups to complain about violations of their rights, setting up investigations into countries where individuals or groups are unable to make complaints (due, for example, to fear of reprisals), and looking into widespread violations even when individual complaints did not show these to be systemic.

Some of these demands were met when the 43rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) adopted an Optional Protocol to CEDAW on March 12, 1999. It contains two procedures:

1. a communications procedure allowing individual women or groups of women to submit claims of violations of rights to the CEDAW Committee; and
2. an inquiry procedure enabling the Committee to initiate inquiries into situations of grave or systemic violations of women's rights.

Women's groups are now mobilizing to ensure that the Protocol is adopted by the General Assembly and then ratified by ten States Parties to the Convention so that it can come into force. The Women's Caucus for Gender Justice and Amnesty International are among organizations which have announced their intention of lobbying for this to be done by June 2000, in time for the Beijing + 5 Conference. It is important to note that countries that have ratified CEDAW do not automatically sign on to the Optional Protocol, which is an independent human rights treaty and must be ratified separately.

### To obtain a copy of the Optional Protocol:

If you have access to the Internet, the WomenWatch website it can be found at:

<[www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol)>

or you can write to:

Division for the Advancement of Women  
DC2-1200

United Nations

New York, NY 10017, USA.

Fax: (1-212) 963-3489

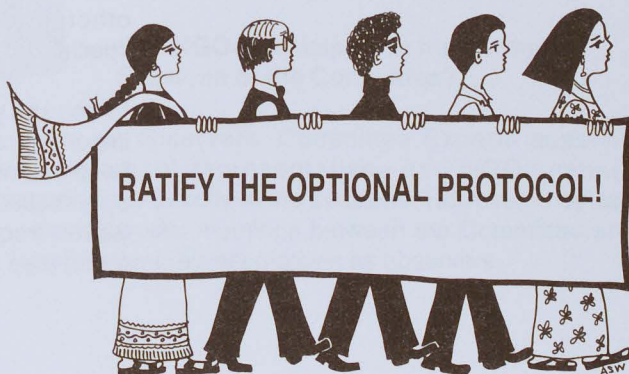
E-mail: <[daw@un.org](mailto:daw@un.org)>

“

*The adoption of the Optional Protocol is particularly significant as 1999 is the 20th anniversary of the adoption of CEDAW. Together with the achievement of the goal of the universal ratification of the Convention by the year 2000, the Optional Protocol is a major step forward in governments' commitment to the realization of women's human rights.*

”

Angela King  
Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-  
General on Gender Issues and  
Advancement of Women.





## LOOKING MORE CLOSELY

“

*Women's NGOs have used the reporting process to good effect to hold their government accountable for the claims and commitments made at the CEDAW Committee sessions, to continue dialogue with their governments on implementing the CEDAW Committee's concluding comments, and as a vehicle to raise public awareness in their own countries.*

”

from **Bringing Equality Home: Implementing CEDAW** (see page 33).

### 2. The Reporting Process

#### Does CEDAW Have a Treaty Body?

Yes. It is known as the CEDAW Committee of Experts.

#### How Many Experts Are On The CEDAW Committee?

There are 23 independent experts, each nominated by their governments (all of which have ratified CEDAW) from a list of persons of high moral standing and competence from all regions of the world and then elected by secret ballot. For a list of the current members, see page 29.

#### When Does a Country Have to Report?

Within a year of ratifying. Subsequent reports are due every four years.

#### When Does the Committee Meet?

Each year in two sessions of three weeks (January and July) with 10 countries from a mix from the various world regions scheduled at each session.

#### What Does the Committee Do?

The experts study and raise questions about each country's report. These questions are collated by UN/DAW and organized into thematic issues at the CEDAW Pre-Session (January), and sent immediately to the UN missions in the countries concerned. The government has to answer these questions in written form and report to CEDAW during the formal dialogue in the following July.

The Committee also looks at factual information coming from other sources, including the media, NGOs, academia, and specialized agencies (e.g. ILO, WHO, UNESCO, UNICEF, etc.).

In recent years, NGOs have been playing an increasingly important role in the monitoring process by preparing what have become known as Shadow Reports. These are usually prepared by a coalition of NGOs within a country, and include concerns and issues frequently not adequately covered in the government's report (see pages 21-26).



# AT ONE CONVENTION

## How Does The Committee Proceed?

All 23 members of the Committee read each of the reports. In addition, some members are assigned a particular country for which they do extra reading. All additional information gathered is shared with the rest of the Committee. An assigned Country Rapporteur gives a preliminary presentation—which includes an assessment of the country report—during closed door sessions. The Committee systematically goes through the 18 substantive provisions of the Convention, article by article.

Governments do not know what information the Committee has until questions are asked.

## Who Represents the Country That is Reporting?

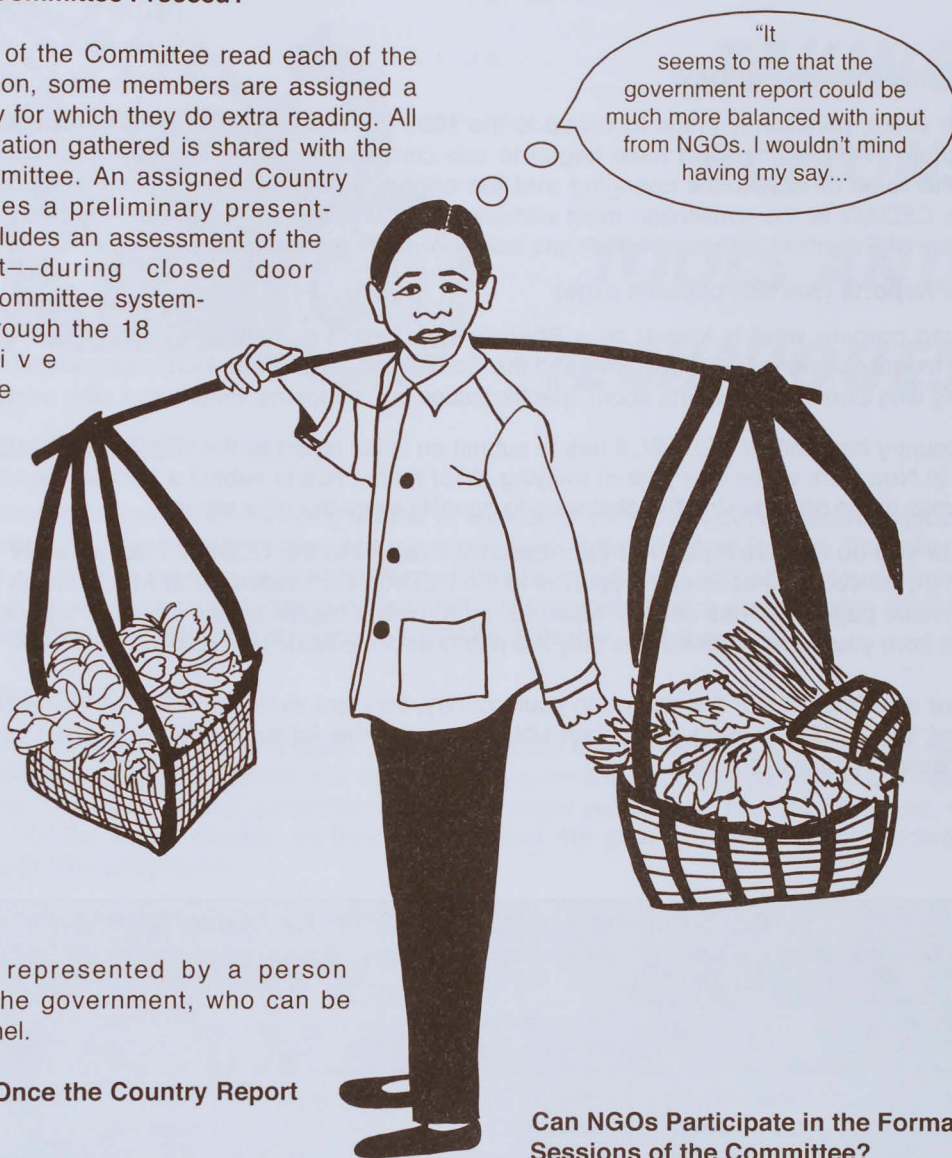
Countries are represented by a person designated by the government, who can be assisted by a panel.

## What Happens Once the Country Report is Presented?

After the round of questions, the government representative is usually given another session to comment or report on additional points that were raised. A brief second round is held if questions still remain. Questions that cannot be adequately answered must be addressed by the government in its next report.

## Can NGOs Participate in the Formal Sessions of the Committee?

Only as observers. Committee Experts question government representatives and NGOs cannot participate directly in the sessions. However, they can attend special meetings between the Committee and government representatives as observers.





# LOOKING MORE CLOSELY AT ONE CONVENTION

## The Role of NGOs and CEDAW

In recent years, particularly in the follow-up to the 1995 UN Fourth World Women's Conference and parallel NGO Forum in Beijing, women have begun to use conventions more actively—and more creatively. As a result, the roles of NGOs are changing and the opportunities for interventions are expanding. Perhaps because CEDAW is the convention most well-known to women and is the only one with a women-specific Committee of Experts, it is the one which has been used with the greatest innovation.

## Shadow Reports (see also opposite page)

NGOs can prepare what is known as a Shadow Report and present this to the Committee of Experts at informal meetings arranged by UN/DAW and the Committee. In addition, NGOs can sometimes meet and talk informally with Committee experts about specific issues and concerns, before and after working sessions.

If your country has ratified CEDAW, it has to submit an initial report to the CEDAW Treaty Body at the United Nations in New York within one year of ratifying. After that, it has to submit a periodic report every four years on progress made on removing the obstacles to equality since the prior report.

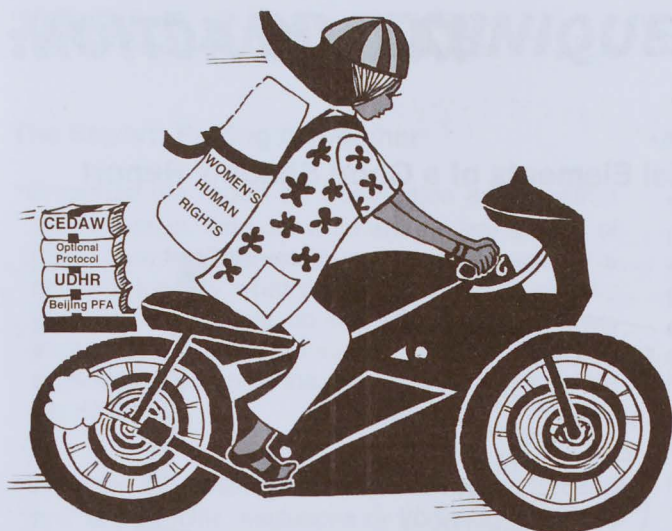
## What can you do to have input into your country's report to the CEDAW Treaty Body?

Find out if your country has already reported to the CEDAW Committee, or at what session it is due to report. (see previous page). If it has already reported, try to obtain copies of any previous reports. They should be available from your foreign ministry as they are public documents once submitted to the UN.

If you are unable to obtain the reports in your country, they are available from the UN once they have been translated into all UN languages. Contact UN/Division for the Advancement of Women at fax: (1-212) 963-3463 or e-mail: <miyaoui@un.org>.

Governments' reports to CEDAW: When they are due (please note that these are only tentative and are subject to change. Contact the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) closer to the session for updated information - see page 28)		
21st session (June to July 1999)	22nd session (January-February 2000)	23rd session (June to July 2000)
Georgia .....(initial report) Nepal .....(initial report) Belize ..(initial and 2nd reports) Chile .....(2nd report) Ireland ... (2nd and 3rd reports) United Kingdom .....(3rd report) Spain .....(3rd report)	India .....(initial report) Jordan .....(initial report) Burkina Faso (2nd and 3rd reports) Eq. Guinea ... (2nd & 3rd reports) Uruguay ... (2nd and 3rd reports) Germany ... (2nd, 3rd, 4th reports) Belarus .....(3rd report) Luxembourg .....(3rd report) Finland .....(3rd report) Sweden .....(4th report)	Libya .....(initial report) Netherlands .....(initial report) Rep.of Moldova ... (initial report) Jamaica ... (2nd, 3rd, 4th reports) Egypt .....(3rd report) Austria .....(3rd and 4th reports) Denmark .....(4th report) Romania .....(4th report)
Alternate Sweden .....(4th report)	Alternate Denmark .....(4th report)	





# TAKING ACTION: TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

## 1. Shadow Reports

One of the most effective tools now being utilized by women in using the CEDAW reporting process as an opportunity to leverage for change at the national level is the **Shadow Report**. The following information on how to prepare a Shadow Report has been adapted and abbreviated from an excellent 8-page working note prepared by International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAP) entitled **Producing NGO Shadow Reports to CEDAW: A Procedural Guide**.

### What is a Shadow Report?

The term 'shadow report' refers to a report created by NGOs that parallels and analyzes the report created by their national government. It is so named because it is not an official report but instead offers another viewpoint on the government report. Shadow reports can provide additional, vital information for the treaty experts as they assess what the governments are doing towards complying with their obligations.

### Why Are Shadow Reports Important?

It can be particularly helpful if the Shadow Report addresses an area of concern that is omitted, neglected or misreported in the government report. It is extremely important that the monitoring bodies have access to accurate and independent information regarding a government's human rights record for the effective implementation of UN treaties. Many times, it is NGOs that can provide this information rather than governments.

### What is the Overall Goal of a Shadow Report?

The overall goal of a CEDAW Shadow Report is to make governments accountable for the protection of women's human rights under domestic and treaty laws. Its preparation gives NGOs an opportunity to identify and address areas of concern and obstacles to the implementation of CEDAW. A well-prepared Shadow Report also strengthens the domestic and international advocacy efforts of NGOs by providing a tool with which to assess what their government is doing to promote and protect human rights, and to monitor how it is honouring commitments made at world conferences. It can also be used to build coalitions, to educate the public and to influence policy or law reform.



## TAKING ACTION:

### Your shadow report...

#### ... should be brief

- A shadow report should ideally be no more than 30 pages. Not all the experts will be equally interested in each country, but all of them are likely to read a brief report.

#### ...should include indicators

- Statistical data and case studies will make your report more useful.

The UN refers to such information as "indicators." Data should be broken down and categorized (disaggregated) by variables such as gender, age, region, language, ethnicity, religion or other factors. Case studies should be testimonies and narratives that "tell the story" in its most human terms.

#### ...should ideally be in English

- The working language of the majority of the Committee experts is English, though many speak more than one UN language.

Several of the experts use only Spanish, French or English. If possible, you should consider translating at least the executive summary of the report into one of these languages.

### Essential Elements of a Good Shadow Report

#### Suggested contents:

1. Title Page
2. Executive Summary
3. Table of contents
4. Introduction
5. The main body

#### Title Page

Include the title, author(s) and date of report.

#### Executive Summary

No more than 3 pages long, this should include the main points of the report and the evidence/data included to support the main points. Include your recommendations for action, using specific language that the Committee can adopt in asking questions and drafting concluding comments.

#### Introduction

Give more information about the production of the report and about your organization(s). Include some background about the economic and political situation in your country that affects the issue(s) you are focussing on. Country information can include details on the main geographic, ethnic, linguistic, demographic and religious characteristics.

This section can introduce the range of relevant laws and how they discriminate against women in law and/or practice. It can also present information about and a critical analysis of such traditional indicators as gross national product, growth rates, per capita income, distribution of workers in the formal and informal economy, rate of inflation, balance of trade, external debt and the role of international financial organizations.



## TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

### The Report: Putting It Together

•**Organize** the report by Convention article rather than by issue. Find out what are the key articles of the Convention that relate to the issue(s) you have chosen. Identify what the provisions obligate the government to do, i.e. do they require passing laws, improving education, ensuring that individuals or organizations outside the government do not violate the right(s)?

•**Describe** the existing laws that relate to the issue(s) and any specific institutions or authorities that are supposed to ensure women's equality. Identify who needs to be trained or made aware of these laws (e.g. judges, police, teachers).

•**Discuss** the obstacles to achieving women's human rights under the existing law. These could range from lack of access to information to not being able to afford a lawyer. Include obstacles faced in the private sphere, for example, in the family. Identify key persons or organizations responsible for implementing (or failing to implement) the laws and/or responsible for violating women's human rights. Also, examine the ways in which societal attitudes, cultural expectations and media representations can be discriminatory.

•**Identify** what steps should be taken by the government, NGOs or others to address the obstacles to achieving women's equality and to redress the situation presented in your report. Include not only legislative action but also education and public awareness campaigns, funding of programmes and other types of affirmative steps.

•**Analyze** rather than simply describing the problems, the evidence and the suggestions for change. Include analysis of reservations and NGO efforts relating to their withdrawal. Address questions that remain open from earlier government reports. Include documentation and evidence to illustrate the issue and how it affects women. This could include statistics, legal cases, testimony of individuals, news clippings, academic research, provision of national and local laws and regulations. You can summarize here and include fuller information in the appendix.



•**Formulate** five (or more) specific actions to be taken by your government that will address the obstacles identified. Recommendations should be concrete and linked to a timeline. They could touch on goals such

as reform or repeal of a particular law that encourages violations, or effective government investigation of human rights violations.

### •Appendix

This can include the text of important laws, a list of references or participants in report preparation, or any other information you believe will add substance to the report.



# TAKING ACTION:

## 2. Work Plans

### Two years prior

Country reports are generally not reviewed until, on average, two years after they have been submitted. Try to obtain a copy of both the report and the CEDAW Concluding Comments, which include recommendations for the improvement of policies and processes concerning women's human rights. These are crucial to NGO action as they detail the specific issues the Committee wishes to see addressed in reports and further action required of your government (see page 28 for how to obtain a copy).

#### As soon as you have a copy of your country's report...

- **Start planning your shadow report! Collaborate with other NGOs!**

Collaboration indicates to the Committee that lots of people are involved, not just one or two individuals, and also helps avoid the problem of many reports coming from different NGOs.

- **Decide what issues you will focus on:**

Select only the most important. It is impossible to cover every issue of concern in a Shadow Report, and the Committee will not have the time to focus attention on more than a few issues.

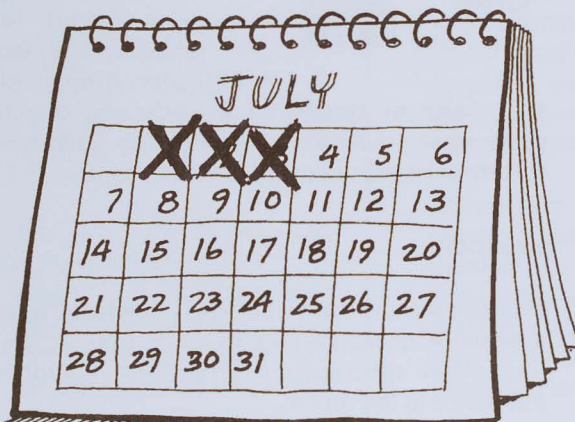
- **Identify the strengths of each participating NGO:**

Talk about the tasks each will undertake, the resources needed, how to make final editorial decisions, etc.

### Six Months Prior

If your country report is coming up for review in July, try to attend the January meeting of the CEDAW Committee in New York. NGOs can meet with the Committee at both sessions, which can be very helpful to both the Committee and the NGOs.

#### START ORGANIZING EARLY!



### Two to Three Months Prior

Confirm that your country has been invited and has agreed to report. NGO Shadow Reports should be couriered to at least a few members of the CEDAW Committee, including the Chairperson and the Country Rapporteur, in early May for the July session and early November for the January session.

Start organizing to obtain the pass you will need to enter the United Nations. Contact the Information Officer (Koh Miyaoi) at UN/DAW at: Fax: (1-212) 963-3463 or e-mail: <miyaoi@un.org>



# TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

## Four Weeks Prior

Send 24 copies of the report to UN/DAW who will then distribute copies to the CEDAW Committee members at the session. If you are attending the session, you can bring 24 copies of the report with you.

## At the Session

Distribute the copies of the Shadow Reports if this has not already been done.

The CEDAW Committee usually holds two midday meetings during the first and second weeks of the session to hear country-specific information from NGOs. This is your opportunity to present your most important points of concern. Note: The working language is English and, due to UN financial cutbacks, there may be no interpretation.

Most Committee members are readily approachable before and after the working sessions to talk informally about issues that concern NGOs. Be prepared for these meetings by having your specific points of concern on a single sheet of paper, ready to be conveyed in a few words.

## Concluding Comments: The Final Step in the Process

At the conclusion of the process, the whole discussion is reviewed and summed up in the "Concluding Comments" (usually prepared by the Country Rapporteur) which identify key issues and recommendations. The Committee often identifies areas needing "further improvement", a euphemism for disturbing trends such as migrant women not receiving any social services, or the criminalization of women who have abortions. "Concluding Comments" are sent out to the government concerned.

Apart from the CEDAW Committee of Experts, there are currently five other human rights monitoring bodies:

- Torture
- Racial Discrimination
- The Child
- Economic and Social Rights
- Civil and Political Rights

All have "Concluding Comments" and the comments of all the other committees are available to the CEDAW Committee as additional data and for human rights issues to be reiterated and emphasized.



# TAKING ACTION:

## 3. Media Outreach

People you will want to reach through the media include:

- government officials - to present your case
- the public at large - to build support for your case
- concerned members of the legal community - to identify the necessary legal expertise
- concerned members of the research community - to research relevant issues or provide useful statistics
- concerned media representatives - to enlist their support in giving visibility to issues
- women in the community - to ensure their understanding of how their rights are reflected in the issues and actions that are being discussed

Some examples of what women have done or are doing include:

### Using Mainstream Media:

**In Australia**, when the government was called upon to present its report, a coalition of women's NGOs met to develop a Shadow Report. They then nominated a small delegation of women and sent them to New York to present their report to the CEDAW Committee of Experts. Included in their delegation was a well known journalist from a major newspaper who sent back daily dispatches to her paper on the Committee's response to both the official and shadow reports. Her stories appeared on the front page of newspapers across Australia, finally focusing national attention on women's issues.

### Making a Video:

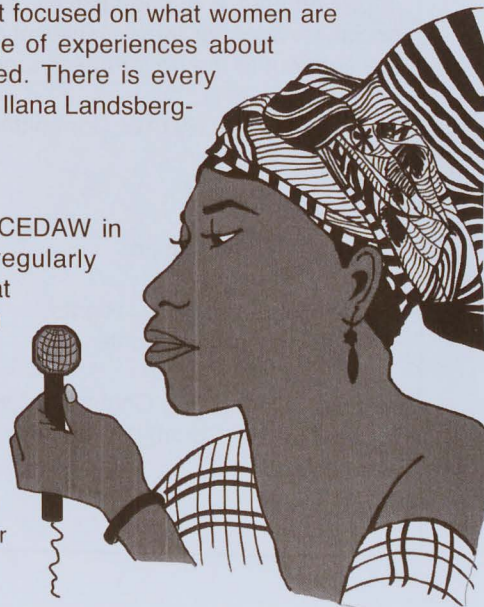
**In the South Pacific**, a group of women in Fiji produced a video presenting in popular format the major provisions and rights guaranteed to women by CEDAW. In this way, they promoted a greater understanding of the convention and its importance to women throughout the country.

### Holding Discussions On-line:

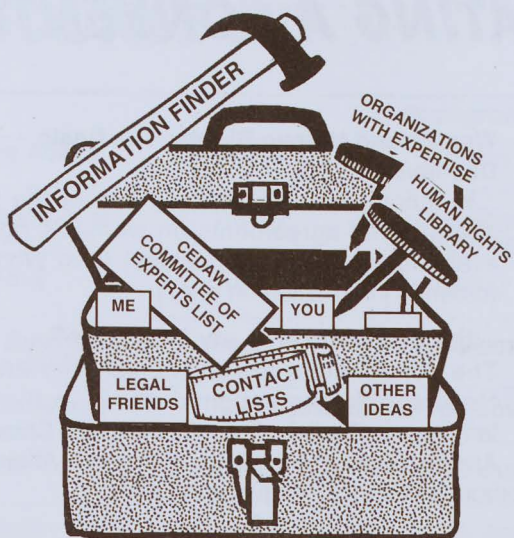
**At the United Nations**, UNIFEM hosted an on-line conference that focused on what women are doing around CEDAW. Its purpose was to enhance the exchange of experiences about what works (and what doesn't work) and issues to be addressed. There is every likelihood that this electronic discussion will be held again. Contact: Ilana Landsberg-Lewis at UNIFEM, fax: (1-212) 906-6705.

### Featuring Articles in Our Own Newsletters:

**International Women's Organizations** are featuring articles on CEDAW in their newsletters, and organizations in various countries are regularly featuring articles on how international conventions work and what their country is doing. Among periodicals featuring information on CEDAW and/or other international conventions recently are Women in Action (from ISIS International/Manila), Women's Health News and Views in South Africa, May 1998, and Women's Watch, the newsletter of IWRAW (International Women's Rights Action Watch). Women's Watch features regular updates on what women are doing worldwide around CEDAW, and is a valuable source for keeping updated with this information. (See page 32 for contact information).







## CREATING A CONVENTION RESOURCE KIT

An effective strategy requires having available the necessary information about the conventions and knowing what resources are available to you—informational, technical and financial—to support your work. One approach is to create you own "resource kit" tailored to your group's interests and objectives. The following pages offer a starting point:

**#1 Information Finder:** Where you can find the basic information you need, such as the text of the conventions and whether or not your country has ratified them.

**#2 The CEDAW Committee of Experts:** It is useful to know who is on the Committee and what their area of expertise is because these are the individuals who will be reading your Shadow Report (should you do one), making determinations on appropriate government action in the future, and deciding on complaints brought forward under the Optional Protocol procedure.

**#3 Contact Lists of Groups Who Have Prepared Shadow Reports:** Because Shadow Reports are increasingly becoming a respected and used source of information for the Committee of Experts in making their recommendations for further action by the government, they are a worthwhile tool to consider developing. In addition to providing an alternative point of view for the Committee, the process of preparing a Shadow Report can also be an organizing focal point for women at the national level. If your organization has not prepared a shadow report before, you may wish to consult other organizations as well as inquire about the preparatory and follow-up process.

**#4 Contact List of Organizations with Expertise in International Conventions.** These groups are an excellent source for advice and support as you and your group begin working with international conventions. Many of the groups have on staff or have access to lawyers knowledgeable about working with international conventions as part of a social change process. Many of these groups also produce periodicals which can be an invaluable source of information on what is a rapidly changing scenario, particularly since the adoption of an Optional Protocol for CEDAW.

**#5 Building a Human Rights Library:** Books that you can consult for further information about conventions and women's human rights.



# CREATING A CONVENTION

## #1 Information Finder

### WHERE DO I FIND...

#### ...the full text of the UN conventions cited in this newsletter?

If you have access to the Internet, the following institutions have convention texts on-line:  
University of Minnesota (USA) Human Rights Library  
(for addresses see page 31)

or

The International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development

or

Internet Resources for Women's Legal and Public Policy Information

If you do not have access to the Internet, other places providing documents are:

For human rights conventions:

Focal Point on Human Rights of Women

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais de Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, **Switzerland**

Fax: (41-22) 917-0214

or

UN Office of the UNHCHR, United Nations  
New York, NY 10017, **USA**

Fax: (1-212) 963-4097

For conventions related specifically to the rights of women:

Division for the Advancement of Women

DC2-1200, United Nations

New York, NY 10017, **USA**

Fax: (1-212) 963-3463

or

UN Publications

DC2-2853, United Nations

New York, NY 10017, **USA**

Fax: (1-212) 963-3489

E-mail: <publications@un.org>

Be sure not to overlook the UN Information Centres—there are 70 worldwide. To find the one in your region, contact:

UN Office of Communications and Public Information (UNOCPI), United Nations

New York, NY 10017, **USA**

Fax: (1-212) 963-7330

Also, check out the university holdings in your country.

#### Women and Human Rights: The Basic Documents

...is a compilation of the full text of the principal international agreements on women's rights. It is available for \$18 (plus postage) from Women, Ink. (ordering information on p. 47).

#### ...the convention in my language?

The conventions are available from the United Nations offices mentioned above in the five UN languages: English, French, Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic. Check the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in your country for local language versions.

#### ...whether my country has signed or ratified a particular convention?

See pp. 35-46 for regional ratification charts of all conventions referred to in this newsletter.

#### ...what reservations my country has made to a particular convention?

Check the UN Web site at <<http://www.un.org>> and look under 'Treaties'. If you do not have access to the Internet, call the Attorney General's office in your country.

#### ...the ministry responsible for implementation?

Start with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in your country. They will direct you to another department if necessary.

#### ...more reading resources or information on the topic?

Refer to p. 31-32 for a list of groups working in the area of international law, many of which have websites and/or periodicals. Another excellent source of women's human rights information, particularly if you are trying to develop your own special collection, is Women, Ink. which makes available for purchase human rights publications from organizations world wide. See pp. 33-34.





# RESOURCE KIT

## #2: Committee of Experts

Name	Country	Background	Area of Expertise	Member Until
Charlotte Abaka	Ghana	Dentistry	Gender and development. Optional Protocol	2002
Ayse Feride Acar	Turkey	Sociologist/academic	Women's studies, gender and development	2000
Emna Aouij	Tunisia	Judge	Justice systems, women's rights	2002
Carlota Bustelo Garcia del Real	Spain	NGO/academic	Prostitution and trafficking, employment	2000
Sylvia Cartwright	New Zealand	High Court Judge	Justice systems, Optional Protocol, family law	2000
Feng Cui	China	All-China Women's Federation	Human/women's/children's rights	2002
Naela Gabr	Egypt	Dept. Asst. Minister for Human Rights	Women and development children's rights, diplomacy	2002
Yolanda Ferrer Gomez	Cuba	Ministry of Women's Affairs	Women's political participation	2000
Savitri Wimalawathi Ellepola Goonesekere	Sri Lanka	Supreme Court Judge	Law, justice systems, children's & women's rights	2002
Ana Isabel Garcia Quesada	Costa Rica	Director, CMF	Women and decision-making national machineries	2002
Aida Gonzales	Mexico	Diplomat	Women and development, children's rights, diplomacy	2000
Rosalyn Hazelle	St. Kitts and Nevis	Ministry of Health & Women's Affairs	Public policy, women's rights, women and development	2002
Rosario G. Manalo	Philippines	Under-Secretary for Int'l Econ. Relations	Diplomacy, women's rights UN system, women & dev.	2002
Mavivi Myakayaka-Manzini	South Africa	Member of Parliament	Women and development, public policy	2002
Salma Khan	Bangladesh	Dir. Gen., M'gement Dev. Centre	Economics, public policy Optional Protocol	2000
Yung-Chung Kim	Republic of Korea	Former parliamentarian/academic	Education, employment	2000
Ahoua Quedraogo	Burkina Faso	Development planner	Rural development and women	2000
Zelmira M.E. Regazzoli	Argentina	Under-Sec'y for Human Rights & Women's Rights	Women's rights, women and poverty	2002
Anne Lise Ryel	Norway	Equality Ombudsperson	Affirmative action in employment	2000
Hanna Beate Schipp-Shilling	Germany	NGO	Affirmative action in employment/political participation	2000
Carmel Shalev	Israel	Policy dev., Assn. for Civil Rights	Justice systems, reproductive law	2002
Kongit Sinegiorgis	Ethiopia	Ambassador to Egypt	Women's rights, UN system, diplomacy	2000
Chikako Taya	Japan	Public Prosecutor	Environment, human rights, justice systems	2002



# CREATING A CONVENTION

## #3: NGOs who have prepared Shadow Reports

The following list of Shadow Reports was provided by the International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAP)\*. Where no address is given, the report was prepared by a number of different NGOs and IWRAW should be contacted for more information.

**CEDAW Forum - Bangladesh**  
General Secretary  
CEDAW Forum  
720 West Nakhhalpara,  
Dhaka 1215, **BANGLADESH**

**Commentary on Bangladesh's Combined 3rd & 4th Periodic Report, June 1997**  
Narlpokkho House 51, Road 9A  
Dhanmandi R.A.  
Dhaka 1209, **BANGLADESH**

**NGO Report on the Status of Women in the Republic of Croatia, 1997**  
B.a.B.e.  
Women's Human Rights Group  
Prilaz Gjuro Dezelica 26  
10 000 Zagreb, **CROATIA**

**NGO Forum on CEDAW Implementation: Indonesia 2nd & 3rd Periodic Reports**  
IWRAW Asia Pacific  
Supplement to IWRAW to CEDAW Country Reports  
January, 1998 IWRAW

**Report from Israel on CEDAW (9/95)**  
The Israel Women's Network  
PO Box 3171  
Jerusalem 91031, **ISRAEL**

The Working Group on the Status of Palestinian Women in Israel  
The Arab Association for Human Rights, PO Box 215  
Nazareth 16101 **ISRAEL**

**Korean Shadow Report**  
Korea Women's Associations  
United  
100-391 Seoul, Jung-ku  
Jangchoong-dong lga 38 84  
**KOREA**

**Women's Reproductive Rights in Mexico: A Shadow Report**  
Center for Reproductive Law and Policy

**New Zealand NGO The Status of Women Report**  
May 1998

**Employment of Women in New Zealand, 1998**  
New Zealand Council of Trade Unions  
PO Box 6645  
Wellington, **NEW ZEALAND**

**NGO Report: Status of Women Nigerian Women**  
Nigerian NGOs Coalition on a Shadow Report to CEDAW  
June, 1998

**Republic of Panama: NGO Shadow Report Coordinator for the Integral Women Development (CODIM)**  
The Women and Development Forum  
The Women of Political Parties  
National Forum  
June 1998

**NGO Shadow Report, Slovakia**  
Coalition of Slovak Women's NGOs  
April, 1998

**NGO Shadow Report to CEDAW South Africa, 1998**  
(Focus: Violence Against Women)  
Masimanyane Women's Support Centre, 17 Porter Street  
East London 5201  
**SOUTH AFRICA**

**NGO Commentary Document on The First South African Government Report on the Women's Convention, 1998**  
NIPILAR, Sammy Marks Square  
Office, 4th Floor, East Wing, 300 Church Street, Pretoria 0001  
**SOUTH AFRICA**

**Tanzania NGOs Shadow Report on CEDAW**  
The Women's Legal Aid Centre et al.

**Women's Reproductive Rights in Zimbabwe: A Shadow Report**  
CRLP and WILDAF  
December, 1997

**Zimbabwe NGOs Shadow Report on CEDAW**  
Dr. mar Maboreke et al.  
November 1997

**Government of Zimbabwe Zimbabwe's First State Parties Report on CEDAW**  
J.M. Zamchiya  
Permanent of Secretary  
Ministry of National Affairs  
Employment  
Creation and Cooperatives  
January 1998

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\* IWRAW  
International Women's Rights  
Action Watch (IWRAW)  
University of Minnesota,  
Twin Cities Campus,  
Humphrey Center,  
301 19th Ave. South,  
Minneapolis,  
MN 55455-0429, USA  
Tel: (1-612) 625-5093  
Fax: (1-612) 624-0068  
E-mail: <iwraw@hhh.umn.edu>  
Web site: <www.igc.org/iwraw/>



# RESOURCE KIT

## #4: Women, Law and Development Groups

### AFRICA

#### Women and Law in Southern Africa Research Project (WLSA)

P.O. Box UA 171, Harare, Zimbabwe  
Fax: (263-4) 729152

Sponsors programmes to educate women about their legal rights; organizes campaigns to change laws that discriminate against women, conducts research on issues relevant to women and the law.

**Periodical:** WLSA Research Project Newsletter

#### Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF)

P.O. Box 4622, Harare, Zimbabwe  
Fax: (263-4) 733670

Seeks to empower women through legal education, law reform and legal services; organizes training programmes on legal literacy; conducts research and disseminates information on legal issues affecting women.

**Periodical:** WILDAF News

### ASIA

#### Asia-Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

9th floor, Asia-Pacific Development Centre, Persiaran Duta, PO Box 12224, 50770 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Seeks to enable women in the Asia-Pacific region to utilize law as an effective instrument to empower them in struggles for justice and equality.

**Periodical:** Forum News

#### Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women

191 Sivalai Condominium, Isaraphab Road 33, Bangkok 10600, Thailand

Fax: (662) 864-1637

E-mail: GAATW@mozart.inet.co.th

Set up to coordinate action around trafficking in women and aims to promote the involvement of grassroots women in all aspects of its work.

### EUROPE

#### B.a.B.e. Grupa za zenska ljudska prava

Women's Rights Group, Petreticev trg 3, 41000 Zagreb, Croatia

Fax: (385) 419302

E-mail: <BABE\_ZG@Zanur-zg.zin.zer.de>

Aims to enhance understanding and foster principles of the UDHR and CEDAW in ways that are culturally relevant to women in Croatia.

#### Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights Nieuwe Zijds Voorburgwal 32, 1012 RZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Fax: (31-20) 622-2450

E-mail: <office@wgnrr.nl>

Reports on global legislation that concerns women's reproductive rights.

### LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN

#### Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA)

P.O. Bag 442, Tunapuna, Trinidad and Tobago

Fax: (1-868) 663-6482

E-mail: cafrainfo@wow.net

Generates information to enhance the effectiveness of women's legal services and women's rights campaigns; encourages re-search in issues related to women and the law.

**Periodical:** CAFRA News (English/Spanish)

#### Comité America Latina y Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer (CLADEM)

Apdo. Postal 11-0170, Lima 11, Peru

Fax: (51-14) 424585

E-mail: <mujer@wamani.apc.org>

Links and promotes the efforts of groups and individuals working in defense of women's rights in Latin America and the Caribbean. Currently leading a campaign to rewrite the UDHR from a more gender perspective.

**Periodical:** CLADEM-Informativo





# CREATING A CONVENTION

## #4: Women, Law and Development Groups (cont.)

### NORTH AMERICA

#### Center for Women's Global Leadership

Douglass College, Rutgers University, 27 Clifton Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08903, **USA**

Fax: (1-732) 932-1180

E-mail: [cwgl@igc.apc.org](mailto:cwgl@igc.apc.org)

Web site:

<<http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cwgl/humanrights>> or

<[gopher://gopher.igc.apc.org:70/11/orgs/cwgl](http://gopher://gopher.igc.apc.org:70/11/orgs/cwgl)>

Seeks to provide public education tools that can be used by local, national, regional and international organizations to highlight women's human rights, and monitors the annual 16 Days of Global Activism.

#### International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development

Web site: <<http://www.ichrdd.ca>> or

<[gopher://gopher.igc.apc.org:70/11/orgs/ichrdd](http://gopher://gopher.igc.apc.org:70/11/orgs/ichrdd)>

This centre provides information on women's rights in Africa, the Americas and Asia. English/French.

#### International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAP)

Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, 301 19th Ave. S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, **USA**

Fax: (1-612) 624-0068

E-mail: <[iwraw@hhh.umn.edu](mailto:iwraw@hhh.umn.edu)>

Web Site: <[www.igc.org/iwraw/](http://www.igc.org/iwraw/)>

Monitors laws and policies worldwide in accordance with the principles of CEDAW.

**Periodical:** Women's Watch

#### University of Minnesota Human Rights Library

This site provides human rights information by country as well as international law. It also includes UN conventions.

Web site: <[www.umn.edu/humanrts/index.html](http://www.umn.edu/humanrts/index.html)>

#### Women, Law and Development International

1350 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 407, Washington, DC 20036, **USA**

Fax: (1-202) 463-7480

E-mail: <[iwld@igc.apc.org](mailto:iwld@igc.apc.org)>

Web site: <[www.wld.org](http://www.wld.org)>

Advocates favourable UN and governmental policies affecting the definition and exercise of women's rights; conducts training in strategies that effectively use or challenge legal and political processes to women's benefit.

**Periodical:** Bulletin

### UNITED NATIONS

#### United Nations Commission on Human Rights

(see page 30 for contact information)

Web site: <<http://www.unhchr.ch>>

Web site includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as country reports and a guide to the UN human rights committees.

#### UN Division for the Advancement of Women (UN/DAW)

(see page 30 for contact information)

DAW is the secretariat for CEDAW. Its Web site contains documentation around this convention. It is also—with the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and UN International Research & Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)—part of a collaborative Web site called WomenWatch: The UN Internet Gateway for the Advancement and Empowerment of Women

Web site: <[www.un.org/dpcsd/daw](http://www.un.org/dpcsd/daw)>

E-mail: <[daw@un.org](mailto:daw@un.org)>

WWW: <[www.un.org/womenwatch](http://www.un.org/womenwatch)>

E-mail: <[womenwatch@un.org](mailto:womenwatch@un.org)>

### WESTERN ASIA

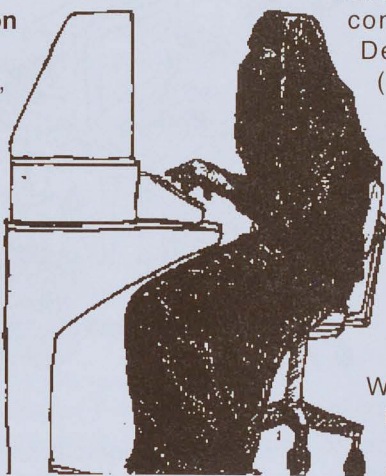
#### Women Living Under Muslim Law (WLUML)

International Solidarity Network, Boite Postale 23, Grables, **FRANCE**.

Fax: 3367-109167. E-mail: <[makha@gn.apc.org](mailto:makha@gn.apc.org)>

A solidarity and international networking organization involved with addressing the impact of religious and customary law on women living in Muslim communities and countries.

**Periodical:** Dossier





# RESOURCE KIT

## #5: Building a Human Rights Library

### ADVOCACY KIT ON CEDAW

Five booklets and nine information sheets on the provisions of CEDAW and its relevance to women's human rights.

1995. 45 pp. US\$5.95. Also available in Spanish and French.

### BRINGING EQUALITY HOME: Implementing CEDAW

Ilana Landsberg-Lewis (ed.)  
Case studies on what can be achieved with this convention, from incorporation in national law to use in the courts.

1998. 45 pp. US\$6.50.

### CLAIMING OUR RIGHTS: A Manual for Women's Human Rights in Muslim Societies

Mahnaz Afkhami and Haleh Vaziri  
A training manual to help grassroots women in Muslim societies understand the universal human rights concepts found in major international human rights documents.

1996. 154 pp. US\$12.00.

### COMMON GROUNDS: Violence Against Women in War and Armed Conflict Situations

Indai Lourdes Sajor (Ed.)  
Reveals the global dimensions of the problem of violence against women in warfare with a specific focus on Asia.

1998. 358 pp. US\$15.00.

### DEMANDING ACCOUNTABILITY: The Global Campaign and Tribunal for Women's Human Rights

Charlotte Bunch and Niamh Reilly  
A comprehensive history and analysis of women's organizing around the UN World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), including the Global Tribunal on Violations of Women's Rights.

1994. 165 pp. US\$15.00.

### EMPOWERMENT AND THE LAW: Strategies of Third World Women

Margaret Schuler (Ed.)  
Shows how women worldwide are gaining the skills needed to enforce the law or to challenge it in order to assert rights, redress injustices or gain access to resources.

1986. 472 pp. US\$20.00.

### FAITH AND FREEDOM: Women's Human Rights in the Muslim World

Mahnaz Afkhami (Ed.)  
Examines domestic and political violence against women resulting from cultural segregation, conflicting legal codes, and the monopoly on the interpretation of Islamic texts by a select group of male theologians.

1995. 244 pp. US\$17.95.

### FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION: A Call for Global Action

Nahid Toubia  
Looks at the global prevalence of FGM, examines the medical facts about the practice, discusses its cultural significance and suggests steps to eradicate it.

1995. 48 pp. US\$9.95. Also available in French

### FROM BASIC NEEDS TO BASIC RIGHTS: Women's Claim to Human Rights

Margaret A. Schuler (Ed.)  
Focuses on the struggle to create an effective and responsive system for enforcing women's human rights.

1995. 597 pp. US\$21.00.

### GENDER JUSTICE: Women's Rights are Human Rights

Elizabeth Fisher and Linda Gray MacKay  
A comprehensive training manual structured as a six-session two-hour workshop series, addressing key areas based on the Beijing Platform for Action's Critical Areas of Concern.

1997. 331 pp. US\$15.00.

### GENDER VIOLENCE: The Hidden War Crime

Women, Law and Development International  
Explores which international, regional and national mechanisms protect civilian women against violence in armed conflict situations and what improvements are necessary.

1998. 133 pp. US\$10.00

### GENDER VIOLENCE AND WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA

Discusses the meaning of "universal" human rights for African women in a world dominated by the West, women's sexual and reproductive rights within Islamic culture, and grassroots strategies to tackle violence against women.

1994. 42 pp. US\$7.00.

### GLOBAL SEX WORKERS: Rights, Resistance and Redefinition

Kamala Kempadoo and Jo Doezeema (Eds.)  
Situates sex workers as working people who should enjoy human rights and workers' rights and reveals the struggle for social change and justice of women and men in prostitution.

1998. 294 pp. US\$19.99.

### HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN: National and International Perspectives

Rebecca J. Cook (Ed.)  
Combines reports and case studies with scholarly assessments of international human rights law and its equitable application to women in different cultures and traditions.

1994. 634 pp. US\$22.95.

### It's ABOUT TIME! Human Rights are Women's Right

Amnesty International  
Highlights the situation of women in some 75 countries and addresses women's rights in the context of war; political, economic, and social risks faced by women; and women's activism in these areas.

1995. 152 pp. US\$8.95.

### LEGAL LITERACY: A Tool for Women's Empowerment

Margaret Schuler and Sakuntala Kadirgamar-Rajasingham (Eds.)  
Explores legal literacy as a process for women's empowerment, and critiques existing methods and programmes.

1992. 340 pp. US\$24.00.

### LOCAL ACTION/GLOBAL CHANGE: Learning about the Human Rights of Women and Girls

Julie Mertus with Malika Dutt & Nancy Flowers  
A comprehensive training manual that combines the development of rights awareness with issue-oriented activities.

1999. 240 pp. US\$25.95

### MIGRANT WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN G7 COUNTRIES: Organizing Strategies

Malika Dutt, Leni Martin and Helen Zia (Eds.)  
Documents the organizing efforts migrant women have made to advance their struggle for improved living conditions, fair wages and human rights.

1997. 69 pp. US\$10.00

### NEGOTIATING REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS: Women's Perspectives across Countries and Cultures

Rosalind Petchesky and Karen Judd (Eds.)  
Discusses when, whether and how grassroots women are involved in everyday decisions about childbearing, work, marriage, fertility control and sexual relations.

1998. 358 pp. US\$25.00

### PROMOTING REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS: A Global Mandate

Reed Boland and Anika Rahman  
Analyses the international advances made towards promoting reproductive rights by focusing on their recognition at the major UN conferences of the 90s.

1997. 48 pp. US\$10.00.

### REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS IN PRACTICE: A Feminist Report on the Quality of Care

Anita Hardon and Elizabeth Hayes (Eds.)  
Researchers from eight countries analyse the delivery of family planning services and unveil the low quality of care available to women.

1997. 235 pp. US\$22.50

Continued overleaf



# A CONVENTION RESOURCE KIT

## #5: Building a Human Rights Library (cont.)

### RIGHT TO KNOW, THE: Human Rights and Access to Education

Articulates a strategy for using international human rights law to provide women with information necessary for maternal and child health. Ten country studies.

1995. 400 pp. US\$26.95.

### RIGHT TO LIVE WITHOUT VIOLENCE, THE: Women's Proposals and Actions

Reports on the Tribunal on Violations of Women's Human Rights (El Salvador, 1993) which exposed the violence present in women's lives, and examines legal provisions and recourse in dealing with violence in the region.

1996. periodical; 139 pp. US\$25.00.

### RIGHTS OF WOMEN: A Guide to the Most Important UN Treaties on Women's Human Rights.

International Women's Tribune Centre. A comprehensive review, using simple language, of women's human rights as defined by UN conventions. Includes strategies for action and the full text of key international human rights documents.

1998. 144 pp. US\$15.95

### RISKS, RIGHTS AND REFORMS: A 50-country Survey of Government Actions 5 Years After the International Conference on Population and Development.

An invaluable tool for NGOs who are advocating for governments to fulfill their commitments. WEDO

1998. 244 pp. US\$19.95

### STATE RESPONSES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Current Status and Needed Improvements

Draws on both a review of laws and a survey of women's rights advocates worldwide to give an overview of current legal responses to domestic violence.

1996. 151 pp. US\$10.00.

### STOLEN LIVES: Trading Women into Sex and Slavery.

Sietske Alink. Documents why and how women are hired, transported and trapped into prostitution, the history of trafficking and the plight of mail order brides and domestic workers.

1996. 180 pp. US\$17.95

### STOP FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION: Women Speak: Facts and Actions.

Fran Hosken. An overview of positive developments being taken to halt FGM, looking particularly at grassroots initiatives, and an examination of the politics of the practice.

1995. 128 pp. US\$15.00

### STRATEGIES FOR CONFRONTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A Resource Manual

Examines the nature, causes and prevention of domestic violence, and how it can be dealt with by governmental agencies and NGOs.

1993. 122 pp. US\$19.95.

### THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN: Human Realities of the International Sex Trade

Siriporn Skrobanek, Nattaya Boonpakdee and Chutima Jantateroo

Exposes and explores the nature and extent of the trafficking of women worldwide and how women can be empowered to end the trade.

1997. 124 pp. US\$17.50

### TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN: Forced Labour and Slavery-like Practices in Marriage, Domestic Labour and Prostitution

Marjan Wijers and Lin Lap-Chew

Well documented and thoroughly researched discussion of trafficking and the international, regional and national laws that do—and do not—protect women.

1997. 213 pages. US\$20.00

### UNSPOKEN RULES: Sexual Orientation and Women's Rights.

Rachel Rosenbloom (Ed.) 30 country reports document human rights violations based on sexual orientation, touching on a whole host of legal, cultural, social and economic issues.

1996. 257 pp. US\$21.95.

### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: New Movements and New Theories in India.

Gail Omvedt. Revisits establishment liberal viewpoints, conventional Marxism, and radical feminist theories of patriarchy and violence to describe and explain the nature of violence against women in India.

1990. 42 pp. US\$6.95.

### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE CARIBBEAN: State and Non-state Responses

Roberta Clarke

Identifies the current situation in the English-speaking Caribbean and Suriname and looks at recent legislative reform and campaigns by women's organizations.

1998. 110 pp. US\$9.95

### WITHOUT RESERVATION: The Beijing Tribunal on Accountability for Women's Human Rights

Niamh Reilly (Ed.).

22 testimonies from women (Beijing, 1995) address a range of women's human rights violations.

1996. 190 pp. US\$15.00.

### WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE: Breaking the Silence.

Ana Maria Brasiliero (Ed.) Documents the different types of violence experienced in various cultures and contexts in Latin America and the Caribbean and strategies for change.

1997. 116 pp. US\$9.95. Also available in Spanish

### WOMEN AND VIOLENCE: Realities and Responses Worldwide.

Miranda Davies (Ed.) Highlights gender-based violence and efforts to combat it with case studies from over 30 countries.

1994. 264 pp. US\$22.50.

### WOMEN OF THE WORLD: Laws and Policies Affecting Their Reproductive Lives

Center for Reproductive Law and Policy. Reviews the formal laws and policies of Brazil, China, India, Germany, Nigeria and the United States and identifies the factors underlying policy differences in each country.

1995. 40 pp. US\$5.00.

### WOMEN OF THE WORLD: Laws and Policies Affecting Their Reproductive Lives: Anglophone Africa

Center for Reproductive Law and Policy. A statistical overview of reproductive health in each country followed by concise analysis of relevant laws.

1997. 173 pp. US\$25.00.

### WOMEN OF THE WORLD: Laws and Policies Affecting Their Reproductive Lives: Latin America and the Caribbean

Center for Reproductive Law and Policy (See above)

1998. 215 pp. US\$25.00. Also available in Spanish

### WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS STEP BY STEP: A Practical Guide For Using International Law And Mechanisms To Defend Women's Human Rights

Describes, in simple language, the concept and content of human rights law and its applicability to women, and provides tools which can be adapted to suit different legal and political contexts.

1997. 200 pp. US\$27.50

### Women, Ink.

777 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017, USA

Tel: (1-212) 687-8633

Fax: (1-212) 661-2704

E-mail: [wink@womenink.org](mailto:wink@womenink.org)

Web site: [www.womenink.org](http://www.womenink.org)

For more information about Women, Ink. and how to order, see page 47.





# WHERE DOES MY COUNTRY STAND?

Knowing which international human rights conventions your government has ratified is important in mapping out your overall strategy. After all, how can you plan your next steps unless you know the current situation? The following pages present a series of charts to help you as you start to find out where your country stands.

## Chart of UN Human Rights Conventions

The first chart in this next section is a composite list of relevant human rights conventions, i.e. conventions that have some relevance to women's human rights. Here you will find such things as the document number, when it was adopted, when it entered into force and how many countries have ratified it.

## Charts Showing Which Country has Ratified Which Convention

The next series of charts are where you will be able to see which conventions your government has ratified. The questions you might want to ask yourself include:

- Which conventions are of particular importance to your work?
- What is your government's stance vis a vis the conventions that address these issues?
- Do you need to have the full text of some of these conventions?
- Is this an "old" or "new" convention?
- Did this convention set a precedent that is important for you to know about?

## Country Convention Chart

It is a good idea to prepare a specific chart for your own country, a chart that will clearly show which conventions have been ratified, which have not, and what this means to you and your group in terms of your work on women's human rights violations. You will find the Country Convention Chart (page 46) a useful tool in bringing international conventions into your national arena.

## International Conventions Overview

As a reminder of which international conventions may be of most use to your work, you may want to consult the international convention overview presented on pages 8 through 12. You may also wish to consult with other groups in your country, region and/or internationally. There are a growing number of excellent information sources available—both on line and in print—that describe initiatives by women in various parts of the world using international conventions to press forwards with women's claims for justice.

A full text copy of all international conventions is available from the United Nations in the five official UN languages: English, French, Spanish, Chinese and Arabic. (See Resource Sheet #1 on page 28). Additionally, you might find a recently published IWTC manual entitled: Rights of Women: A Guide to the Most Important UN Treaties on Women's Human Rights very useful. This publication, along with many other publications on women's human rights, is available through Women, Ink. (See page 34).



## COMPOSITE CHART OF UN HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS

ACRONYM	NAME OF CONVENTION	DOCUMENT NO.	ADOPTED	ENTERED INTO FORCE	RATIFICATION (No. of countries)
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	2200A(XXI)	16 December 1966	23 March 1976	140
OPICCPR	Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	2200A (XXI)	16 December 1966	23 March 1976	92
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	2200A(XXI)	16 December 1966	3 January 1976	141
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women	34/180	18 December 1979	3 September 1981	157
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	2106A(XX)	21 December 1965	4 January 1969	154
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child	A/RES/44/25	20 November 1989	2 September 1990	188
CDE	Convention against Discrimination in Education	429 U.N.T.S. 93	14 December 1960	22 May 1962	85
ERC	Equal Remuneration Convention	C.100	29 June 1951	23 May 1953	146
MPC	Maternity Protection Convention (Revised)	C.103	4 June 1952	7 September 1955	42
DC	Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention	C.111	24 June 1958	15 June 1960	139
WFRC	Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention	C.156	June 1981	11 August 1983	29
HWC	Home Work Convention	C.177	June 1996	Not Entered into Force	0
CNMW	Convention on the Nationality of Married Women	1040(XI)1	29 January 1957	11 August 1958	64
CCM	Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages	521 U.N.T.S. 231	7 November 1962	9 December 1964	47
CRSR	Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees	189 U.N.T.S. 150	28 July 1951	22 April 1954	130
CSTPEP	Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Person and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Other	96 U.N.T.S. 271	2 December 1949	25 July 1951	71
SCAS	Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery	226 U.N.T.S. 3	30 April 1956	30 April 1957	117
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	39/46	10 December 1984	26 June 1987	108

Ratifications as of April 20, 1999

	ICCPR	OPICCPR	ICESCR	CEDAW	ICERD	CRC	CDE	ERC	MPC	DC	WFRC	HWC*	CNMW	CCM	CRSR	CSTPEP	SCAS	CAT
Algeria	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R								
Angola	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R								
Benin	R	R	R	R		R									R		R	R



CRSR	Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees	521 U.N.T.S. 231	7 November 1962	9 December 1964	47
CSTPEP	Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Person and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Adult	189 U.N.T.S. 150	28 July 1951	22 April 1954	130
SCAS	Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery	96 U.N.T.S. 271	2 December 1949	25 July 1951	21
CAT	Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	224 U.N.T.S. 2	30 April 1984	30 April 1987	112
		30/04/84	30/04/84	30/04/87	108

# Africa

(Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)

	ICCPR	OPICPR	ICESCR	CEDAW	ICERD	CRC	CDE	ERC	MPC	DC	WFRC	HWC*	CNMW	CCM	CRSR	CSTPEP	SCAS	CAT
Algeria	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R					R	R	R	R
Angola	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R					R			
Benin	R	R	R	R		R	R	R		R				R	R			R
Botswana				R	R	R		R		R					R			
Burkina Faso	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R				R	R	R		R
Burundi	R		R	R	R	R		R		R					R	R		R
Cameroon	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R					R	R	R	R
Cape Verde	R		R	R	R	R		R		R					R			R
Central African Republic	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R						R	R	
Chad	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R					R			R
Comoros				R		R		R							R			
Congo	R	R	R	R		R	R	R								R	R	
Cote d'Ivoire	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R				R	R		R	
Djibouti				R	R	R		R							R	R	R	R
Egypt	R		R	R		R	R	R		R					R	R	R	R
Equatorial Guinea	R	R	R	R	R	R		R							R			
Ethiopia	R		R	R		R				R	R				R	R	R	R
Gabon	R		R	R	R	R		R		R					R			
Gambia	R	R	R	R	R	R									R			
Ghana				R	R	R		R	R	R			R		R		R	
Guinea	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R	R	R	R	R
Guinea-Bissau			R	R	R	R		R		R					R			
Kenya	R		R	R		R									R			R
Lesotho	R		R	R	R	R							R		R		R	
Liberia				R	R	R	R			R					R			
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R			R	R	R
Madagascar	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R					R		R	

\*Not Entered into Force

R = Ratified or Acceded

UN Human Rights Conventions





# Africa

(Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)

	ICCPR	OPICPR	ICESCR	CEDAW	ICERD	CRC	CDE	ERC	MPC	DC	WFRC	HWC*	CNMW	CCM	CRSR	CSTPEP	SCAS	CAT
Malawi	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R			R		R	R	R	R
Mali	R		R	R	R	R		R		R			R	R	R	R	R	R
Mauritania					R	R				R					R	R	R	
Mauritius	R	R	R	R	R	R	R						R				R	R
Morocco	R		R	R	R	R	R	R		R					R	R	R	R
Mozambique	R			R	R	R		R		R					R			
Namibia	R	R	R	R	R	R									R			R
Niger	R	R	R		R	R	R	R		R	R			R	R	R	R	R
Nigeria	R		R	R	R	R	R	R							R		R	
Rwanda	R		R	R	R	R		R		R					R			
Sao Tome & Principe	R					R		R		R					R			
Senegal	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R					R	R	R	R
Seychelles	R	R	R	R	R	R									R	R	R	R
Sierra Leone	R	R	R	R		R	R	R		R			R				R	
Somalia	R	R	R		R					R					R			R
South Africa	R			R	R	R				R				R	R	R		R
Sudan	R		R		R	R		R		R					R		R	
Swaziland					R	R	R	R		R			R					
Togo	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R					R	R	R	R
Tunisia	R		R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R	R	R		R	R
Uganda	R	R	R	R	R	R	R						R		R		R	R
United Republic of Tanzania	R		R	R	R	R	R						R		R		R	
Zaire	R	R	R	R	R	R		R							R		R	R
Zambia	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R			R		R		R	R
Zimbabwe	R		R	R	R	R		R						R	R	R		

\*Not Entered into Force  
R = Ratified or Acceded

UN Human Rights Conventions

# Asia

(Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)



# Asia

(Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)

	ICCPR	OPICPR	ICESCR	CEDAW	ICERD	CRC	CDE	ERC	MPC	DC	WFRC	HWC*	CNMW	CCM	CRSR	CSTPEP	SCAS	CAT
Afghanistan	R		R		R	R		R	R	R						R	R	R
Bangladesh			R	R	R	R			R	R				R		R	R	R
Bhutan				R		R												
Cambodia	R		R	R	R	R									R		R	R
China			R	R	R	R	R	R							R			R
Democratic People's Rep. of Korea	R		R			R		R										
India	R		R	R	R	R		R	R	R						R	R	
Indonesia				R		R	R	R										R
Iran	R		R		R	R	R	R	R	R					R		R	
Japan	R		R	R	R	R		R			R				R	R		
Lao People's Democratic Republic				R	R	R										R	R	
Malaysia				R		R		R					R				R	
Maldives				R	R	R												
Mongolia	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R				R			R	
Myanmar						R												
Nepal	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R							R	R
Pakistan				R	R	R			R	R						R		
Philippines	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R
Republic of Korea	R	R	R	R	R	R		R							R			R
Singapore				R		R							R			R	R	
Sri Lanka	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R			R	R	R
Thailand	R			R		R												
Viet Nam	R		R	R	R	R	R			R								

\*Not Entered into Force  
R = Ratified or Acceded

## UN Human Rights Conventions



# Caribbean/North America

(Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)

	ICCPR	OPICCPR	ICESCR	CEDAW	ICERD	CRC	CDE	ERC	MPC	DC	WERC	HWC*	CNMW	CCM	CRSR	CSTPEP	SCAS	CAT
Antigua & Barbuda				R	R	R				R			R	R	R		R	R
Bahamas				R	R	R							R		R		R	
Barbados	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R	R			R	
Belize	R			R	R	R	R								R			R
Dominica	R		R	R	R	R	R	R		R					R		R	
Grenada	R		R	R	R	R		R										
Guyana	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R								R
Jamaica	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R			R		R		R	
St. Kitts & Nevis				R	R	R												
St. Lucia				R	R	R		R		R			R				R	
St Vincent & the Grenadines	R	R	R	R	R	R	R								R		R	
Suriname	R	R	R	R	R	R									R		R	
Trinidad & Tobago	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R			R	R			R	
Canada	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R			R		R		R	R
United States of America	R				R												R	R

\*Not Entered into Force  
R = Ratified or Acceded

UN Human Rights Conventions

## Europe

(Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)

ICCPR OPICCPR ICESCR CEDAW ICERD CRC CDE ERC MPC DC WERC HWC\* CNMW CCM CRSR CSTPEP SCAS CAT



# Europe

(Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)

	ICCPR	OPICCPR	ICESCR	CEDAW	ICERD	CRC	CDE	ERC	MPC	DC	WERC	HWC*	CNMW	CCM	CRSR	CSTPEP	SCAS	CAT
Albania	R		R	R	R	R	R	R					R		R	R	R	R
Armenia	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R		R			R
Austria	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R			R	R	R		R	R
Azerbaijan	R		R	R	R	R		R	R	R			R	R	R	R	R	R
Belarus	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R			R	R	R
Belgium	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R					R	R	R	
Bosnia & Herzegovina	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R	R	R	R
Bulgaria	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R		R	R	R	R
Croatia	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R	R	R	R
Cyprus	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R		R	R	R	R
Czech Republic	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R	R	R	R	R	R
Denmark	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R	R	R		R	R
Estonia	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R							R			R
Finland	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R		R	R	R	R	R	R
France	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R				R	R	R	R
Georgia	R	R	R	R		R	R	R		R								R
Germany	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R	R	R		R	R
Greece	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R	R				R		R	R
Holy See <sup>1</sup>					R	R									R			
Hungary	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R	R	R	R	R	R
Iceland	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R			R	R	R		R	R
Ireland	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R			R		R		R	
Italy	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R					R	R	R	R
Kazakhstan				R	R	R									R			R
Kyrgyzstan	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R	R	R	R	R	R
Latvia	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R		R	R	R	R

\*Not Entered into Force

R = Ratified or Acceded

<sup>1</sup>Not a UN member state

## UN Human Rights Conventions



# Europe

(Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)

	ICCPR	OPICCPR	ICESCR	CEDAW	ICERD	CRC	CDE	ERC	MPC	DC	WERC	HWC*	CNMW	CCM	CRSR	CSTPEP	SCAS	CAT
Liechtenstein				R		R									R			R
Lithuania	R	R	R	R		R		R		R					R			R
Luxemburg	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R				R		R	R	R	R
Malta	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R		R		R	R
Monaco					R	R									R			R
Netherlands	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R	R		R	R
Norway	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R		R	R	R	R	R	R
Poland	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R	R	R	R	R	R
Portugal	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R				R	R	R	R
Rep. of Macedonia	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R	R	R	
Republic of Moldova	R		R	R	R	R	R		R	R								R
Romania	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R	R	R	R	R	R
Russian Federation	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R		R	R	R	R
San Marino	R	R	R			R		R		R	R						R	
Slovak Republic	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R	R	R	R	R	R
Slovenia	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R	R	R	R
Spain	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R	R	R	R	R
Sweden	R	R	R	R		R	R	R		R	R		R	R	R		R	R
Switzerland <sup>1</sup>	R		R	R	R			R	R	R					R		R	R
Tajikistan				R	R	R	R	R	R	R					R			R
Turkey				R		R		R		R				R	R		R	R
Turkmenistan	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R					R		R	
Ukraine	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R			R	R	R
United Kingdom	R		R	R	R	R	R	R						R	R		R	R
Uzbekistan	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R								R
Yugoslavia	R		R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R	R	R	R

\*=Not Entered into Force R = Ratified or Acceded <sup>1</sup> =Not a UN member state

## UN Human Rights Conventions



## (Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)

## UN Human Rights Conventions

<sup>1</sup>With the exception of the occupations and work specified in Art. 7 para 1 (b) and (c)



# Pacific

(Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)

	ICCPR	OPICCPR	ICESCR	CEDAW	ICERD	CRC	CDE	ERC	MPC	DC	WFRC	HWC*	CNMW	CCM	CRSR	CSTPEP	SCAS	CAT
Australia	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R		R		R		R	R
Fiji				R	R	R							R	R	R		R	
Kiribati <sup>1</sup>						R												
Marshall Islands						R												
Micronesia/ Federated States of Nauru						R												
New Zealand	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R	R	R		R	R
Papua New Guinea				R	R	R									R			
Samoa				R		R								R	R			
Solomon Islands			R		R	R	R								R		R	
Tonga <sup>1</sup>					R	R												
Tuvalu <sup>1</sup>						R									R			
Vanuatu				R		R												R

\*Not Entered into Force

R = Ratified or Acceded

<sup>1</sup>Not a UN member state

## UN Human Rights Conventions



# Western Asia

(Ratifications as of April 20, 1999)

	ICCPR	OPICPR	ICESCR	CEDAW	ICERD	CRC	CDE	ERC	MPC	DC	WFRC	HWC*	CNMW	CCM	CRSR	CSTPEP	SCAS	CAT
Bahrain					R	R											R	R
Brunei Darussaleh						R	R											
Iraq	R		R	R	R	R	R	R		R						R	R	
Israel	R		R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R		R	R	R	R
Jordan	R		R	R	R	R	R	R		R			R	R		R	R	R
Kuwait	R		R	R	R	R	R			R						R	R	R
Lebanon	R		R	R	R	R	R	R		R								
Oman						R												
Qatar					R	R				R								
Saudi Arabia					R	R	R	R		R							R	R
Syrian Arab Republic	R		R		R	R		R		R						R	R	
United Arab Emirates					R	R		R										
Yemen	R		R	R	R	R		R		R	R			R	R	R		R

\*Not Entered into Force

R = Ratified or Acceded

UN Human Rights Conventions



DEVELOP YOUR OWN COUNTRY CONVENTION CHART

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Convention	Year in Force	Ratified Y/N	Reservations Y/N
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)	1948		
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)	1966		
Optional Protocol on Civil and Political Rights (OPICCPR)	1966		
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	1966		
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)	1981		
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)	1965		
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	1989		
Convention Against Discrimination in Education (CDE)	1960		
Equal Remuneration Convention (ERC)	1953		
Maternity Protection Convention (MPC)	1955		
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (DC)	1960		
Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (WFRC)	1983		
Home Work Convention (HWC) (not yet entered into force)			
Convention on the Nationality of Married Women(CNMW)	1957		
Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (CCM)	1962		
Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (CRSR)	1951		
Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (CSTPEP)	1949		
Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (SCAS)	1956		
Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)	1984		
Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees	1967		
Convention on the Political Rights of Women (CPRW)	1953		
Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (CSSP)	1954		
Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (CRS)	1961		



# Women, Ink.

A project of IWTC, Women, Ink. is a book marketing and distribution initiative offering "one-stop shopping" for the best and latest books on gender and development from more than 90 publishers and organizations worldwide. Its collection of 250+ titles encompasses issues ranging from Gender Analysis and Planning and Women's Human Rights to Structural Adjustment and Natural Resource Management. A selection of titles related to human rights is listed on pages 33-34.

It is important to note that, because it is a distributor, Women, Ink. first has to purchase from the various publishers the books that it sells. For this reason, it is unable to provide books at no cost. There are, however, ways in which groups and individuals in the Global South can have access to Women, Ink. books. For example, you could approach your local library and ask them to order books which you would then be able to use. Or you could add a Book Acquisitions line item to your next funding proposal (donors are often sympathetic to organizations' need for resources).

## Direct Access

In addition, Women, Ink. has just launched a new programme called 'Direct Access.' This scheme enables professionals working on gender and development issues to select and receive quality, up-to-date publications in countries where materials are hard to come by and where foreign exchange makes purchasing a problem. Through Direct Access, an agency based in the Global North can establish an annual account for each of its offices in the Global South for the purchase of books from the Women, Ink. catalogue. Country programme staff then order directly from Women, Ink. by fax, phone, e-mail or letter and the orders are sent directly to the country office. At the end of every quarter, Women, Ink. sends an account statement to both the agency and the country office. Please write to us if you would like more information.

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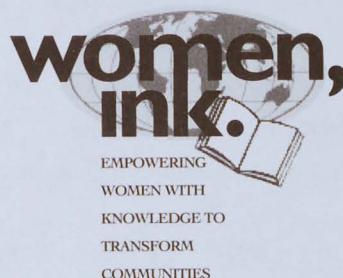
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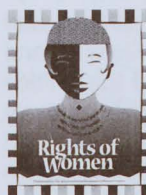


# International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC)

The International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC) is an international women's non-governmental organization set up in 1976 following the first UN World Conference on Women and the International Women's Year (IWY) Tribune (Mexico City, 1975). IWTC's purpose is to promote the increased participation of women in shaping and redefining a development process that is participatory, just, equitable and sustainable.

Working in collaboration with women's organizations in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, IWTC uses information, education, communication and organizing skills and strategies to convert research, policy and ideas into action. It offers workshops and technical support, produces training manuals and other educational materials, provides networking and information-brokering services and fosters linkages between the international and the national, between the abstract and the practical, between the governmental and the non-governmental.

IWTC produces a women and development newsletter, *The Tribune*, and the bi-weekly IWTC Women's GlobalNet, a one-page bulletin of up-to-the-minute information on activities and initiatives of women worldwide, sent via fax and e-mail to tens of thousands of individuals and groups in every world region. In addition, in collaboration with partner groups worldwide, IWTC produces training manuals, information briefs, resource kits, slide-tape sets and more.



## **Rights of Women, A Guide to the Most Important United Nations Treaties on Women's Human Rights**

is IWTC's most recent publication. Written in simple, non-legal language, it is an extremely user-friendly manual that is liberally illustrated with line

drawings, diagrams and charts. Also included are resources (e.g. contacts, publications and web-sites), charts showing which countries have signed on to which conventions, and much more!

**Rights of Women** provides a 'right by right' guide to issues such as: education; marriage; employment; refugees; sexual exploitation and trafficking; and torture. Section 4: "Taking Action" offers advocacy and lobbying ideas and strategies, including how to hold a tribunal on violations of women's human rights, how to develop your own country manual of rights, and how to become a part of a human rights community on-line.



**All IWTC's materials are free to individuals and groups in the Global South, and we will be happy to send you one copy of *Rights of Women* if you fill out the form below.**

Further copies can be ordered at a cost of US\$15.95 each, plus shipping and handling (see insert or request more inserts).

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